

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»

Volume 16 Number 4708

AMMAN SATURDAY MAY 25, 1991, TH AL QU'DEH 11, 1411

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

Egypt backs Syrian-Lebanese treaty

CAIRO (R) — Egypt said on Friday a treaty signed by Syria and Lebanon this week was a positive step towards Arab solidarity. "Egypt considers the Syrian-Lebanese brotherhood agreement a positive step between both states, their governments and peoples," Deputy Prime Minister Boutros Boutros Ghali told reporters. "It will lead to greater Arab solidarity." The treaty, which strengthens Syria's hand as a power broker in Lebanon, was denounced by the spiritual leader of Lebanon's Christians, Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Butros Sfeir, and former President Amin Gemayel who said it would bring their country under Syrian domination. Israel has said it was worried the pact would give its arch foe Syria a free hand in Lebanon. Israel controls a 15-kilometre deep self-declared security zone in southern Lebanon. "Egypt hopes this agreement will support Lebanon's demands to implement Security Council resolution 425 on Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon," Ghali said.

Mother Teresa to visit Iraq

GENEVA (AP) — Mother Teresa, who won the 1979 Nobel peace prize for her work on behalf of the Third World's sick and poor, flies to Baghdad next week at the invitation of President Saddam Hussein. Announcing her trip Friday as "good news," Sadruddin Aga Khan, the U.N. relief coordinator for the Gulf, told reporters she would take a special U.N. flight leaving Monday. Another group of about 30 U.N. security guards assigned to protect refugees in the north and south of Iraq will travel with Mother Teresa, Sadruddin said. He said final agreement had been reached with Iraq Thursday on dispatching about 500 guards, normally stationed with U.N. offices in Geneva, Vienna and other countries.

War caused \$450m damage to health facilities — Iraq

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Gulf war damage to Iraq's hospitals, clinics, medical equipment and supplies totals an estimated 112 million dinars (\$452 million), the Iraqi government said Friday. The official Iraqi news agency quoted an unnamed official with the planning department of the health ministry as saying damage to buildings was an estimated 25.6 million (\$82 million). The loss for equipment and medicine was 116.3 million dinars (\$372 million), he said. The official said 32 provincial hospitals were damaged, along with 15 health centres and five civil defence centres. The damage was blamed on allied bombing during the Gulf war as well as battles between Iraqi troops and Shiite or Kurdish rebels during their short-lived rebellions in March.

Arab-American files lawsuit

CHICAGO (AP) — An Arab-American man has filed a 3-million dollar lawsuit accusing four Chicago police officers with illegally beating, arresting and imprisoning him, an attorney said Thursday. Samhan Ali, 60, a Jordanian-born U.S. citizen, contends the officers beat him, made racial insults and threatened to deport him during a May 23, 1989, incident on the city's south side, his attorney G. Flint Taylor said. Tina Vicini, a spokeswoman for the Chicago police department, said she was unaware of the lawsuit and declined to comment. Taylor said the incident occurred after a dispute among Ali, a jewelry salesman, and two of his customers.

Team looking for BBC crew find 2 bodies

LONDON (R) — Britain's defence ministry said two bodies had been found in northeast Iraq by troops looking for a missing British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) film crew, the BBC reported on Friday. Nick Della Cusa, his wife Rosanna, and Charles Maxwell went to the area in March to film Kurdish refugees. The two bodies which were found by British marines have not yet been identified but will be flown to Britain.

U.S. tell allies arms treaty blocked

BRUSSELS (R) — The United States told its NATO allies on Friday that a landmark arms treaty cutting conventional forces in Europe was still blocked despite U.S.-Soviet talks in Washington aimed at resolving the dispute. NATO sources said James Woolsey, U.S. ambassador to the 22-nation arms talks in Vienna, told ambassadors from the 16 alliance nations that the top-level negotiations this week had made some progress, but failed to resolve one key issue. "There was some disappointment at the meeting today," said one NATO source, who asked not to be identified. The treaty, widely seen as the cornerstone of Europe's future after the cold war, was signed last November in Paris by NATO and Warsaw Pact nations but has not yet been implemented because of the highly complex dispute.

Bush helps and Shamir thanks him Israel airlifting thousands of Falashas following collapse of Ethiopian regime

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia (AP) — As rebel forces closed in on Ethiopia's capital, Israel began airlifting Ethiopian Jews from the besieged city. Thousands of Jews gathered outside the Israeli embassy in the capital, awaiting their turn to leave. Hundreds more crowded the grounds inside. The White House said Friday that President George Bush had a role in the "emergency humanitarian airlift" that is bringing Ethiopian Jews in Addis Ababa to Israel. The airlift is the result of an agreement between Israel and Ethiopia after consultations with the United States. White House press secretary Martin Fitzwater said in a statement. The statement said Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir called Bush Friday as the president was aboard air force one en route to Boston for a speech.

"We expect the airlift to last two days," Fitzwater said. "We have been informed that the operation is proceeding smoothly." "We understand that the Ethiopian decision to allow the Falashas (Ethiopian Jews) to depart the country was taken in response to a letter from President Bush on May 22," to acting Ethiopian President Tesfaye Gebre-Kidan, Fitzwater said. Fitzwater's statement said that Shamir called Bush "to thank him for the American role in the release of the Falashas." "The prime minister and the president also discussed the Mideast peace process. The prime minister expressed his appreciation for Secretary of State James Baker efforts in the Mideast and said he hoped the peace process will continue." Fitzwater said no U.S. planes were being used in the airlift.

Four Israeli air force C-130 cargo planes picked up the first load of several hundred Ethiopian Jews in the morning and apparently planned to shuttle back and forth between Addis Ababa and Israel, according to sources. The operation, expected to take two days, aimed to carry an unknown number of the 18,000 Ethiopians in Addis Ababa seeking to emigrate, according to the sources, who spoke on condition they not be identified. Israeli security men wearing civilian clothes supervised admission to the compound and Ethiopian soldiers kept order among the shoving, shouting Jews outside. A fleet of yellow and red buses carrying the Ethiopian Jews shuttled back and forth between the embassy and the international airport all day. An airport source had seen the first load of passengers leave Friday morning. He said they boarded at the far end of the airport and that it was not possible to closely estimate their numbers. Each C-130 is capable of carrying several hundred passengers. The Israeli embassy would not comment on the airlift. Israel has reportedly been preparing for a possible airlift of the Jews for several weeks as rebels trying to topple the Ethiopian government have tightened their grip on the capital. In the last year, many Ethiopian Jews have come on foot to Addis Ababa from their home province of Gondar in northwestern Ethiopia. Gondar was one of the first regions to fall to the rebels in the current offensive that started Feb. 23. In 1984, a secret Israeli-financed airlift called Operation

U.S. administration's criticism of settlements catapults congressmen into defence of Israel

From Rania Atalla in Washington

THE U.S. administration's sharp criticism of Israel's settlement policy Wednesday appears to have given a jolt to the U.S. Congress' view about Israel's position on peace, prompting some leading supporters of Israel to rush to its defence and attempt to apportion blame for the conflict in the Middle East squarely on Arab shoulders. Initial news reports and analysis in the media of the U.S.-led peace efforts during U.S. Secretary James Baker's trips to the Middle East had cast Israel and Syria as more or less equally intransigent, until, that is, Baker's comments this week focused attention on Israel's actions that contradicted its supposed willingness to be flexible on peace. Leading supporters of Israel in the Senate, however, went on the offensive, chiding the administration for its criticism and accusing Mr. Baker of unfairly singling out Israel. What remains to be seen is which direction this debate will take and whether the administration's criticism of Israel would be translated into concrete actions that would further the cause of peace in the region. It was approximately 18 months ago that a frustrated secretary of state lost his cool with Israeli leader Yitzhak Shamir and challenged Tel Aviv to get in touch with the White House once it was serious about talks with the Palestinians.

Mr. Baker's comments were particularly significant because they were made before the House and Senate Appropriations Committee which appropriate U.S. foreign aid to other countries. On Wednesday the secretary of state said that Israeli settlements in occupied Arab lands — which violate U.S. policy — are the biggest impediment to a peace settlement. "I don't think that there is any bigger obstacle to peace than the settlement activity that continues not only unabated but at an enhanced pace... Nothing has made my job of trying to find Arab and Palestinian partners for Israel more difficult than being greeted by a new settlement every time I arrive," Mr. Baker told the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations. That policy, he added, "substantially weakens" Washington's hand in trying to bring about peace. Mr. Baker's words were echoed by President George Bush Thursday when he said that his secretary of state spoke for the administration and was articulating official U.S. policy. "It would make a big contribution to peace if these settlements would stop... We would like to see those settlements stop," Mr. Bush said. It remains to be seen how far, if at all, Washington is willing to pressure Israel on the issue. Israel's leading supporters in the Senate — Alfonse D'Amato

(Republican-New York), Frank Lautenberg (Democrat-New Jersey), Robert Kasten (Republican-Wisconsin) and Arlen Specter (Republican-Pennsylvania) — said the administration should cite Arab countries' "unwillingness" to fall in line with U.S. policy on the issue. They cited Saudi Arabia's "reluctance" to participate directly in a peace conference, Syria's "buildup of its missile arsenal," and the general attitude of Arab countries "which still maintain a state of belligerency against Israel and who observe a secondary boycott" against Israel. The consensus that the secretary managed to build during his four trips to the region involved five key issues: that a comprehensive settlement would serve as a basis for launching direct negotiations between Israel and its Arab neighbours. By Mr. Baker's own admission, these areas of consensus have yet to be translated into a practical peace process. The two key issues that are yet to be agreed upon are the role of the U.N. and the modalities of the conference — whether it would be a merely ceremonial conference, as Israel desires, or whether it would have the ability to reconvene to look into unresolved issues, as Syria insists. "The positions of Syria and Israel on these two issues have been directly opposed," Mr. Baker said, although he hastened to add that the two issues are "primarily symbolic." Washington believes the conference should be able to reconvene "if all the parties agree," with the purpose of examining reports on the bilateral and multilateral negotiations. Although it was clear Mr. Baker was providing a relatively optimistic assessment of where the U.S.-led peace efforts stand, some of his statements spoke of the complexity of such a process, one example being the Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank. "I have not decided that we're not going to get any movement on settlement activity... at least before we have an active peace process going, and it's going to be just that much more difficult to get a peace

Without Jordan there will be little chance of peace process. I think King Hussein is almost indispensable to the peace process — Baker

U.S. firms that do business with Israel. None of the Arab countries is willing to "come forth" as Egypt had done in the late 1970s to sign the Camp David accords with Israel, the lawmakers maintain. "I can't escape the conclusion that Israel really does want peace with the Arab nations, (while) the Arab nations don't want peace with Israel," contended congressman Sidney Yates, a Democrat from Illinois. Congressman Larry Smith, another Democrat from Florida who is a strong supporter of Israel, said Mr. Baker was "not painting the situation with the right colour" because "you have Israel on one side and you have a number of Arab states

Dumas urges Israel to halt settlements

TUNIS (R) — French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas on Friday backed U.S. calls for Israel to halt Jewish settlement in the occupied Arab territories. Dumas, on a visit to Tunisia, said such a move by Israel would give fresh impetus to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's efforts to promote an Arab-Israeli peace conference. "I hope a symbolic gesture will be made by the Israeli state... in response to the request made by President Bush and Mr. Baker for the freezing of settlements in the occupied territories," Dumas told a news conference in Tunis. He said such a gesture "would be interpreted as a sign of confidence" and would be capable of "producing a new start which I earnestly desire." U.S. President George Bush said on Thursday that Israel could make a major contribution to peace by stopping settlement in

the occupied territories. Baker has made four trips to the Middle East in three months but has so far been unable to get agreement on a conference. Dumas said France supported Baker's efforts but added: "I am now obliged to note that we are in a new deadlock. I regret it." He said: "It would be regrettable if Baker's initiatives ended in failure. If so things could only get worse..." Dumas conferred on Thursday and Friday with Tunisian leaders, including President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali. He discussed the situation after the Gulf crisis, the Arab-Israeli conflict and relations between the Maghreb countries and Europe. Following the Gulf war, Dumas has also visited the North African states of Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt to discuss prospects for Middle East peace.

U.S. presents rival draft on deportation of Palestinians

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The United States circulated a proposed Security Council resolution on Friday, calling on Israel to ensure the safe return of four deported Palestinians, as a counter to a somewhat tougher draft submitted by non-aligned countries. The United States had originally proposed that the council issue an agreed statement, which carries less weight than a resolution. But the seven non-aligned members, who earlier this week requested a council meeting on the deportations, insisted on the adoption of a resolution. Informal consultations among all 15 council members were postponed until the late afternoon to allow time for efforts to reach a compromise on wording. The non-aligned text declares that Israel's action in deporting the four Palestinians to Lebanon last Saturday was "in violation of previous Security Council resolutions" as well as of the Fourth Geneva Convention on the treatment of civilians in time of war. The U.S. text would omit the reference to violation of previous council resolutions. While the non-aligned text "demands" that Israel refrain from deporting any Palestinian civilians from the occupied territories and ensure the safe and immediate return of all those deported, the U.S. draft "reiterates that Israel... must refrain" from deporting any Palestinian civilians and ensure the safe and immediate return of all those deported. The United States and U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar issued statements earlier this week deploring the expulsions. Israel has said the deportees, all from the Gaza Strip, were senior activists in the Palestine Liberation Organisation's mainline Fatah movement and had been imprisoned a number of times for violent activity, including throwing hand grenades.

Two of them are employees of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), which has also protested against the Israeli action. The four were flown by helicopter to Israel's self-declared "security zone" in southern Lebanon after the Israeli supreme court denied appeals against their expulsion. The Security Council issued a statement on March 27, shortly after deportation orders against the men were first issued, deploring the Israeli decision and expressing serious concern about the situation in the Israeli-occupied territories. The latest deportations brought to 66 the number of Palestinians banished by Israel since an Arab uprising began in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in December 1987. The council's non-aligned members are: Cuba, Ecuador, India, Ivory Coast, Yemen, Zaire and Zimbabwe.

Tunisian police hunt 10 Muslim leaders

TUNIS (R) — Tunisian newspaper on Friday published front-page photographs of ten Muslim fundamentalist leaders wanted by security forces on suspicion of involvement in a plot to overthrow President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali. They included Rached Ghannouchi, the exiled head of the outlawed Nahda Muslim movement, accused by the authorities of master-minding the plot. Some 300 Nahda members, including about 100 military men, have been arrested in recent weeks on suspicion of planning a coup to set up an Islamic state. The wanted men include Habib Mokni and Salah Karkar, who fled into exile in 1987, and Mohammad Chammam, said to be the head of the movement's secret services who left the country last January. Among the others is Najmeddine Hamrouni, former leader of a Muslim students movement. "If any of the individuals in the photographs is recognised the nearest police or national guard station should be informed as soon as possible," a police notice said. In Paris on Thursday, Rached Ghannouchi said Tunisian police were hunting 10,000 members of his movement and there was an international warrant out for his arrest.

Gandhi's spirit freed

NEW DELHI (AP) — Rajiv Gandhi's body was committed to the flames Friday in the last rite that by Hindu tradition freed his soul from earth and from the political violence that scarred his nation and ended his life. The former prime minister's 20-year-old son Rahul lit the funeral pyre of logs atop a flower-draped brick platform near a memorial to Gandhi's mother, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who also fell victim to assassins. Gandhi's Italian-born widow Sonia, in a departure from Hindu tradition, followed the body to the cremation site and participated in the symbolic placement of small logs on the pyre. Ashen-faced, her eyes hidden by large sunglasses, she stood beside the couple's 21-year-old daughter Priyanka. News reports have said the regime of President Menzies since Israel restored ties with Ethiopia in 1989 following a 16-year break. However the emigration has been carried out in a stop-and-go fashion, with about 500-1,000 allowed to leave each month. Several thousand of the Jews have been allowed to emigrate since Israel restored ties with Ethiopia in 1989 following a 16-year break. However the emigration has been carried out in a stop-and-go fashion, with about 500-1,000 allowed to leave each month. Several thousand of the Jews have been allowed to emigrate since Israel restored ties with Ethiopia in 1989 following a 16-year break. However the emigration has been carried out in a stop-and-go fashion, with about 500-1,000 allowed to leave each month.



Rajiv Gandhi

Jordan condoles

AMMAN (J.T.) — Private Chamberlain to His Majesty King Hussein, Prince Ali Ben Nayef, and Minister of Justice Majed Khalifa represented Jordan at the funeral of the assassinated Indian leader Rajiv Gandhi. On Wednesday the King cabled his condolence to the

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued on page 5)

Allied forces in Dohuk

DOHUK, Iraq (AP) — The allied occupation of northern Iraq entered what the U.S. military hopes will be its final phase Friday when two dozen aid workers and American and British soldiers moved into Dohuk to begin rebuilding the provincial capital. A dozen U.S. army humvees and several civilian vehicles cruised into Dohuk on Friday morning. Doctors, engineers and sanitation and health experts set to work on the city, badly damaged in the Kurdish rebellion against Baghdad government. All the soldiers were American except for one British engineer. They were the only troops in the area, with Iraqi security forces barred from a 320-square-kilometre region around Dohuk. But allied officials said this did not mean an extension of their "security zone" in northern Iraq. Many Kurds said that while they welcomed the allied presence, they worried about what would happen once coalition

forces withdrew. Kurdish leaders and the Iraqi government are negotiating in Baghdad over Kurdish demands for autonomy within Iraq. More than 100,000 Kurds are camping in valleys of northern Iraq, waiting to return to Dohuk, one of the largest population centres in the north. Another 50,000 refugees, mostly from the Dohuk area, remain in the Cukurca camp. Allied forces initially wanted to avoid entering Dohuk as part of their stated objective to make the occupation of northern Iraq as painless as possible for the Iraqi government. But Kurdish leaders insisted on some Western troops in Dohuk before they would advise their people to return home. U.S. Army Lt. Gen. John Shalikashvili and his Iraqi counterpart in the region hammered out an agreement on Wednesday allowing Western soldiers in the city.


Algerian government, opposition denounce Madani's strike call

ALGIERS (Agencies) — The government and several opposition parties have urged their supporters to block an unlimited general strike called for Saturday by Algeria's biggest opposition group, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS). "The declared aim of this adventurous action, by means of an illegal political strike, is to destabilise the democratic movement and the exercise of citizen's freedom of choice," Interior Minister Mohammed Salah Mohammed said in a statement published on Thursday night. He said Muslim activists in the FIS were seeking to provoke the government into violence.

FIS leader Abassi Madani, speaking to reporters on Thursday, called for the indefinite general strike to press the party's demands for a presidential election on June 27 at the same time as Algeria's first multi-party parliamentary elections. President Chadli Benjedid was elected in 1988 for a five-year term. Madani said the FIS also demanded the withdrawal of new electoral laws and creation of a special committee of theologians and party leaders to supervise elections for a new national assembly.

(Continued on page 5)

On the Occasion of
INDEPENDENCE DAY



ARAB BANK
takes pleasure in conveying to
HIS MAJESTY KING HUSSEIN
and to the
PEOPLE OF JORDAN
its most cordial wishes and greetings

Rebels on gates of Addis Ababa

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Rebels were poised near the Ethiopian capital Friday but appeared to be holding off entering the city ahead of peace talks with the government due to start in three days' time.

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) has rejected a truce call by the new leadership which took over Tuesday when iron-fisted ruler Mengistu Haile Mariam quit after 14 years in power and fled the country.

The EPRDF, whose spectacular advances in recent months were largely responsible for forcing Mengistu's hasty exit, said its troops were about 30 kilometres away from Addis Ababa on the western front and also close to the north and south.

But diplomats said although the rebels had moved toward encircling the city in the past few days and looked capable of beating a demoralised army for the final victory, they had not come any closer to the capital.

This suggested they could hold off in order to go to the U.S.-brokered round table talks in

London next Monday with the best possible bargaining position, the diplomats said.

"They could obviously do it (enter Addis Ababa). But why bother? If the government shows the slightest sign of stone-walling at the talks, the rebels will be able to say 'watch out, don't dare give us any trouble'," one Western diplomat told Reuters in Nairobi by telephone from Addis Ababa.

The EPRDF, an alliance of four rebel groups which has fought to oust Mengistu's government and set up what it says will be a broad-based administration leading to a democratic system, has given assurances it will avoid a bloodbath in the city.

But, rejected ceasefire calls of former vice-president and acting President Tesfaye Gabre Kidan, the EPRDF and its main ally the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, have said they will not call off their fight until the government is toppled or a peace deal has been worked out.

Scores of government soldiers have fallen back on the capital in the past few days, sparking fears

they would turn to looting and violence.

But so far there have been no reports this had started.

Journalists who toured the city Friday morning said troops milled around the main market, the mercato, some of them buying civilian clothes.

Soldiers, some of them with crutches, sat around in small groups in other parts of the capital. At the train station, a large gathering of troops appeared to be preparing to head home, or to their camps, in the east of the country.

"On the whole the place is remarkably calm and normal," said one diplomat. But Western embassies have repeated advice to their nationals to leave the city.

The United Nations, which as well as aid and development organisations has a large staff working for the Addis Ababa-based U.N. Economic Commission for Africa, planned to charter two planes Friday to fly out dependents.

Mengistu, who took power in

1977, three years after an army officers' revolution which overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie, fled to Zimbabwe, where he has business interests.

Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, a personal friend of Mengistu, told reporters in Paris Friday he would be granted political asylum in the southern African country.

In Addis Ababa, visible vestiges of Mengistu's 14 bleak years in power have quickly vanished. His portraits have been ripped down from offices and public places and Thursday a giant statue of Lenin, a potent symbol of Mengistu's hated communist ideology, was dismantled.

The state-run radio, television and news agency, long devoted to praising Mengistu's leadership, have also begun discrediting the former ruler.

The radio described Thursday how Mengistu cheated his way out of the country. Diplomats said this was an example of the new leaders trying to distance themselves from Mengistu and counter rebel charges they are just his henchmen.



Saddam Hussein

Saddam asks journalists to write what they like

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has told Iraqi journalists to write what they like and promised to take the blame for any mistakes they might make, an Iraqi newspaper said Friday.

"Write what you like. If you get it right, you take the credit. If you get it wrong, I'll take the blame," he told a five-hour meeting of journalists, writers and intellectuals Tuesday.

The ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra gave the first account of the meeting in a front-page editorial.

As part of a mild liberalisation, Iraqi newspapers have been carrying some criticism of shortages and high prices but none have challenged the invasion of Kuwait last year or the conduct of the war with the United States and its allies.

The editor of Al Thawra said the people at the meeting made observations, proposals and criticisms "as though they were talking to themselves."

"Because nothing is sacred or forbidden when we're talking about the future of the country and the dignity of the citizens," he said.

"This is the Saddam Hussein we know and respect and love, in whose leadership we believe and of which we are proud. Because he has all the qualities of the unique leader and the great man..."

"Our absolute confidence in his leadership can be equal to his absolute confidence in what we write," he added.

Bush visits Gibran Memorial in Washington

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush Friday attended the dedication ceremony of a Washington memorial to Khalil Gibran and paid the poet the supreme compliment, saying Gibran has sought a "Kinder, gentler world."

The president, who often says he wants to help make America a "Kinder, gentler nation," praised the author of "The Prophet" to several hundred people gathered in a newly landscaped garden of fragrant flowers and meditation benches.

Many in the crowd were of Lebanese descent, like Gibran. Bush's chief of staff, John Sununu, was also on hand.

"He drew us where we were unused to climb, and shared what he saw — the promise of a kinder, gentler world," Bush said of Gibran.

The president, still looking thin from his recent thyroid ailment but frequently flashing his characteristic big grin, said there was a need to renew Gibran's message of tolerance.

Gibran was born in Lebanon in 1883 and died in New York in 1931.

French, Soviets oppose Bush's tough stance on Iraqi sanctions

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — U.S. President George Bush's opposition to lifting or easing U.N. sanctions against Iraq until President Saddam Hussein is out of power has not found much backing in the Security Council.

Britain alone among the five permanent Security Council members with veto power has unequivocally supported Bush, while France and the Soviet Union oppose the U.S. position. China, the fifth member, has not commented publicly.

Security Council resolutions on the Gulf crisis and aftermath do not make removal of President Saddam a condition for lifting economic sanctions which prohibit all financial dealings with Iraq. There is no mention of changing the Iraqi government in any Gulf crisis or post-war document.

In that sense, some diplomats said, U.S. efforts to maintain sanctions until President Saddam is gone violate the letter and spirit of existing U.N. resolutions. One of them demands that Iraq must pay reparations with a portion of its future oil export revenues.

Some U.N. member nations say the United States is correct, but other say it is violating the terms of ceasefire and other U.N. resolutions which mandate gradual lifting of sanctions as Iraq complies with conditions, like destruction of weapons and payment of compensation.

Cuba, a member of the council, and some developing nations say the United States is trying to impose its will on the international community and to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs by trying to dictate how it should be governed.

Cuban Ambassador Ricardo Alarcon said Wednesday that sanctions should have been lifted when Iraqi troops were driven from Kuwait and when the for-

mer Kuwaiti government was restored. The economic embargo was imposed last August in order to restore the government of Kuwait and no other conditions were attached.

British Prime Minister John Major said two weeks ago that Britain might veto any move to lift sanctions until President Saddam leaves office.

But Soviet Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov said Wednesday, in answer to questions, that "the sanctions are against Iraq, not against Saddam Hussein."

He noted that relevant Security Council resolutions do not require a change in the government of Iraq before sanctions are lifted.

French diplomats said their government favoured a softer approach than that enunciated by the Americans. The diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that pressure should be maintained on President Saddam.

But they said that Iraq needs to sell some oil to be able to rebuild its nation after the Gulf war and to pay compensation to the victims of its aggression against Kuwait. "We have a saying in French, 'Don't overload the boat, or else it will sink,'" one diplomat said. "That is what we must avoid here."

Chinese diplomats did not comment, but observers familiar with Chinese government thinking said that China almost certainly would consider the U.S. statements on President Saddam's ouster to be interference in Iraq's internal affairs.

Bush said Monday and Secretary of State James A. Baker repeated Wednesday that the United States intended to continue sweeping economic sanctions against Baghdad government until President Saddam was forced out.

"Saddam Hussein himself is the single greatest obstacle to any hope for the future of the people of Iraq," Baker told Congress on Wednesday.

"Without constant international monitoring of and pressure against this leader, this Iraqi government will continue to pose a danger to the peace and security of the Middle East," he said.

U.S. officials haven't said whether the United States would use its veto to block lifting of sanctions against Iraq.

Ambassador Peter Hain, secretary of Austria, president of the U.N. sanctions committee, declined to say whether Bush's statement contradicted U.N. provisions. He said reporters should read relevant resolutions and decide whether President Saddam's removal was mentioned.

The situation is complicated because the ceasefire resolution, no. 687 of April 3, says the sanctions will be lifted when the Security Council agrees that Iraq has fulfilled all demands.

These include elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, arrangements for compensation or reparations, return of all Kuwaiti property, including museum artifacts, and release of all Kuwaiti prisoners.

In order for Iraq to be able to pay compensation, it must be permitted to export oil, a percentage of which will be attached to payment to victims.

But if the United States with its veto blocks Iraq's export of oil, then the Baghdad government will not be able to fulfill the conditions which would mean lifting of all economic sanctions.

The United States and Western nations say they will not permit Iraq to export its oil until they are satisfied that Iraq has no internal resources to enable it to buy food and humanitarian aid.

'U.S. blocks aid to Lebanon until hostage issue resolved'

BEIRUT (AP) — The United States is blocking the flow of badly needed financial aid to Lebanon until Western hostages held by pro-Iranian militants are freed, the daily newspaper As-Safir reported Friday.

Quoting an unnamed cabinet member, the leftist newspaper said: "The United States is still banning Arab and Western aid to Lebanon. It refuses to permit such assistance until the American and other Western hostages held in Lebanon for several years are released."

Because Prime Minister Omar Karami's government needs funds to rebuild the war-ravaged country, the hostage issue has become a top priority for the cabinet, he said. Lebanon depends heavily on outside support, mainly from the pro-American French governments in the Gulf, Europe and the United States.

Western backing for a Lebanese-Syrian cooperation treaty, which has been rejected by Israel, also hinges on the release of the Westerners. That has prompted Syria to also accelerate efforts to resolve the hostage issue, the minister said.

The release of the hostages is a political issue which will provide Western protection for the country of Lebanon, cooperation and coordination," the minister said.

This, he said, is behind Syria's interest in reaching an under-

standing with Iran on this (hostage) issue."

Beirut and Damascus need international support for the treaty to deter possible Israeli retaliation. Israel maintains the accord is tantamount to de facto occupation of Lebanon by Syria, the Jewish state's chief Arab enemy.

The Lebanese press reported troop buildups along Israel's northern border just before the treaty was signed Wednesday by President Hafez Assad of Syria and Lebanese President Elias Hrawi.

There are 13 Westerners missing in Lebanon and believed held by pro-Iranian militants linked to Hizbollah, or Party of God. Syria, the main power broker in Lebanon, has 40,000 troops stationed on Lebanese soil under a 1976 Arab League peacekeeping mandate. It also enjoys close relations with Iran.

Iran, which played a key role in previous hostage releases, has said it would use its influence again if the West pressures Israel to free Muslim detainees.

A government source, speaking on condition of anonymity, disclosed Friday that Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Boueiz was planning a trip to Iran in early June and "might discuss the hostage issue and its effects on Lebanon."

The source would not comment on the As-Safir report. Hizbollah and Israel have in

recent days announced their readiness to swap seven Israelis for 300 Shiites held in Khiam in the Israeli-occupied border strip in South Lebanon.

"We are ready for the exchange," said the newly elected leader of Hizbollah, Abbas Musawi, in an interview Thursday.

"There have been positive steps recently. There is an effort in this direction. We pray to God that it (the effort) bear fruit," he said.

The highest-ranking Shiite cleric in Lebanon, Sheikh Mohammed Mehdi Shamseddine, said May 13 that the release of the Khiam prisoners Israeli-occupied South Lebanon would also bring about the release of hostages.

Hizbollah is also seeking the release of one of its activists, Sheikh Abdul Karim Obeid, who was kidnapped in an Israeli raid on his village in South Lebanon in July 1989. He is believed held in jail in Israel, not at Khiam.

Israel has said Obeid would be part of a deal for the return of the Israelis and the release of foreign hostages.

The seven Israeli servicemen have been missing since Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon. It is not known how many of them are alive.

Not all the Israelis are with Hizbollah. Some were taken by other guerrillas who cooperate closely with Hizbollah and Syria.

Iran opens doors to Western books

TEHRAN (AP) — From Shakespeare to botany and antique table design, Western books are more popular than ever in this Muslim nation, which tried to prohibit their import in the years following the 1979 Islamic revolution.

About 750,000 people attended the 10-day national book fair this month, where individuals could order both local and imported books. Their main complaint was the delay of up to a year in receiving foreign works.

"It's worth the wait," said Katia Salmasi, a 27-year-old photographer. "We admire American knowledge."

Although there are signs of thawing in the decade-old chill between Iran and the West, foreign publishers are still reluctant to commit themselves to a country where anti-Western factions remain powerful.

"It's unfortunate that the publishers are reluctant to take advantage of the market here because they'd get great business," said Richard Williamson, an Australian who represented about 25 U.S. and British publishers at the fair.

"The Iranians have a desire to read American books," Williamson said.

In fact, they have often been able to. In spite of official restrictions, U.S. and European books were often smuggled in for sale on the thriving black market.

The Tehran book fair started in 1988, the year Iran dropped its official ban on book imports. It was first geared toward medical books.

But it has expanded to include a broad range of books. This year's fair exhibited more than 60,000 titles from 30 countries, even though choices are still limited by official censorship.

Crowds of young college students and small groups of women in veils clutching children wandered through the halls lined with book stands.

Some stopped and goggled as they examined art books — the most popular category and the one that gives censors the most headaches.

At first, censors demanded that the books depicting scantily clad women be wrapped in clear plastic to keep them from being opened. It didn't work.

Then they removed the book jackets with nude pictures. Finally, they tore out the objectionable paintings.

Cypriot president sees U.N. chief, says no progress to report

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Cypriot President George Vassiliou conferred for about an hour Thursday with the secretary general but said he could not report progress on resolving the Cyprus problem until the U.N. chief had a response from the Turkish Cypriot side.

"I had a very useful meeting with the secretary general. I am afraid I cannot make any report on any progress because he had no such news to give me," Vassiliou told reporters.

"But what I can say is that he is continuing his efforts and he continues to wait for satisfactory answers from the Turkish side."

Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar has been trying for years to reunite the divided Mediterranean island under a federal system of government.

The last round of direct talks here under his auspices between Vassiliou, representing the Greek

Cypriots, and Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denkash broke down in March 1990. Vassiliou, who meets President George Bush in Washington next week, said the issues on which Perez de Cuellar was awaiting answers from the Turkish Cypriots dealt with territorial matters and displaced persons.

These concern the proportion of the island to be controlled by each of the two communities in a federal state, and whether people displaced by fighting 17 years ago have the right to live anywhere on the island, as the Greek Cypriots insist.

"Territory and displaced persons — these are the key issues," Vassiliou said.

Cyprus has been virtually partitioned since 1974 when troops from Turkey occupied the northern 38 per cent of the island after a short-lived coup in Nicosia engineered by the military junta

then ruling Greece.

In 1983 the Turkish Cypriots proclaimed the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, recognised only by Ankara.

Meanwhile, Turkish Cypriot officials and Turkish advisers who hold periodic working-level talks here with the U.N. secretariat, have concluded several days of meetings and are due to return home Friday.

They include Turkish Cypriot U.N. representative Osman Ertug — Ozer Koray, under-secretary for foreign affairs — Mumtaz Soyasl, a professor from Turkey who serves as a constitutional adviser to Denkash — and Kokmaz Haktanir, a senior official of the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

The U.N. team was headed by Gustave Feissel, a senior secretary official closely involved with the Cyprus issue.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Documentary

19:00 News in French

19:15 French varieties

19:30 News in Hebrew

20:00 News in Arabic

20:30 The Bill Cosby Show

21:00 Entertainment

21:30 News in English

22:30 Feature Film: "The Untouchables"

PRAYER TIMES

06:30 Fajr

07:30 (Sunrise) Duha

12:30 Dhuhr

16:13 Asr

19:13 Maghreb

20:00 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swedish, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637285

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrace Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 685326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

It will be fair and windy will be northerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Amman Min./max. temp. 14 / 29

Aqaba 19 / 35

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Ayman Abdul Jabbar 614222

Dr. Fakhri Abu Tayeh 585880

Dr. Mohammed Al Awd 741391

Dr. Arad Al Ashtab 602507

Firas pharmacy 661912

Perdows pharmacy 783336

Al Asma pharmacy 637053

Nairokh pharmacy 626672

Al Salan pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 611111

Civil Defence Immediate 630341

Rescue 199

Fire Brigade 891228

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 665860

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 897467

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813613/32

Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6

Al-Khat Maternity, J. Amn. 644412/2

Jabal Anman Maternity 642362

Mallus, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 664171/4

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:30 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)

08:15 New Delhi (RJ)

10:35 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)

11:00 Damascus (RJ)

11:15 Aqaba (RJ)

17:45 Cairo (RJ)

19:30 Tripoli (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:15 Beirut (ME)

13:00 Sana (Y)

22:35 Damascus, Paris (AF)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 600 / 450

Banana (Mukammal) 450 / 400

Beans 460 / 400

Broad beans 600 / 500

Carrot 120 / 80

Cauliflower 200 / 150

Cucumbers (large) 180 / 120

Cucumbers (small) 140 / 80

Eggplant 300 / 220

Garlic 500 / 400

Grapes 250 / 200

Leamon 150 / 100

Lettuce (per one) 120 / 80

Marrow (large) 120 / 80

Marrow (small) 260 / 220

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:00 Damascus (RJ)

09:00 Aqaba (RJ)

11:15 Tripoli (RJ)

12:00 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)

12:10 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Home News

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY MAY 25 1991 3

CSCC to get goods from Italy, Poland

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing the Civil Servants Consumer Corporation (CSCC) returned home after wounding up two official visits to Italy and Poland where they held talks with representatives of commercial and industrial companies to supply CSCC with certain products.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the corporation's Director Mohammad Al Abdullat, who headed the delegation, said they concluded contracts with Italian parties to supply the corporation with good quality men's wear.

The corporation has also signed agreements with Polish parties to supply the CSCC with household utensils, foodstuff, sportswear and tools.

The CSCC agreed with the Italian and Polish parties concerned to barter their goods with Jordanian products, including vegetables, fertilisers and phosphate, he said.

A Polish delegation will be arriving in Amman next week to work out shipping details and coordinate barter operations.

The delegation also included Supply Ministry Secretary General Radi Ibrahim and the CSCC's inspector general.

Germany contributes to UNICEF Gulf aid

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government of Germany Thursday pledged \$5.8 million for UNICEF emergency interventions in southern Iraq, the largest contribution for this emergency programme to date. With this pledge, UNICEF has received a total of \$13 million to assist children and women caught in the aftermath of the Gulf war. The overall needs for UNICEF-supported interventions in Iraq total \$25 million.

The German pledge will allow UNICEF to markedly step-up its emergency assistance to Iraqi children and women. Specifically, these funds will go towards emergency relief assistance to vulnerable children and women in southern Iraq suffering the adverse effects of the Gulf war and internal unrest in the areas of health, nutrition, and water and sanitation.

In addition, this contribution will enable UNICEF to strengthen its sub-office in Basra, which acts as the central point for all U.N. humanitarian interventions in southern Iraq. All UNICEF interventions are part of the U.N. Humanitarian Emergency Programme in Iraq under the overall co-ordination of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, executive delegate of the secretary general of the United Nations.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Argentina

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Friday sent a cable to President Carlos Menem of Argentina congratulating him on his country's Independence Day, and wishing him continued good health and happiness and the people of Argentina further progress and prosperity.

Princess Alia attends graduation

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Al Faisal Thursday attended the graduation of a new batch of girls from Zarqa Cultural Centre. The girls, numbering 96, have successfully completed training courses in sewing, croch, flower arrangement and ceramics. At the end of the celebration Princess Alia presented diplomas to the graduating girls.

Lecture to tackle literary criticism

AMMAN (J.T.) — In cooperation with the French Centre for Studies and Research on the Contemporary Middle East, Dr. Luc Barbusco will deliver a lecture in Arabic on the aspects of literary criticism on Sunday, at 6.30 p.m. at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.



Iraqi vice-president in Amman en route to Baghdad: Iraqi Vice-President Taha Yassin Ramadan Thursday arrived in Amman, en route to Baghdad, after taking part in Yemen's celebrations of the first anniversary of the Yemeni unity.

Mr. Ramadan was received at Amman airport by Prime Minister Mudar Badran, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister Salem Masaadeh and the Iraqi Ambassador to Jordan Noori Ismail Al Wayyes.

Ministry says fewer Jordanians registered for pilgrimage this year

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Compared to last year, less than half the number of Jordanian pilgrims have registered to go to Haj (holy pilgrimage to Mecca) this year, according to Naef Abu Rajab, the director of public relations at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs.

"This coming Sunday will mark the last day for registering for Haj and only 5,000 people from Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza Strip have registered to go as compared to 13,000 people last year," Mr. Abu Rajab said.

"The main reason for the reduction in number comes from the political situation which reflected on many people's peace of mind," the secretary general at the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Dr. Ahmad Hilayel said.

"But we also started this year to make the arrangements for the would-be pilgrims later than last year," he added referring to the transportation and accommodation arrangements that are usually made for pilgrims by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs.

Dr. Hilayel continued saying that all the arrangements were well under way even though the cost of renting houses for

the pilgrims was expected to be slightly higher because of the delay in taking their names. Nevertheless, he said that the ministry had done its best to ensure decent housing facilities for the pilgrims.

The ministry is also arranging to meet all the needs of the pilgrims coming from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. "We are arranging with the General Passport and Civil Registration Department in Amman for temporary passports for each of the pilgrims coming from the West Bank," Dr. Hilayel said.

The first group of pilgrims is expected to leave to Saudi Arabia on June 6.

Dr. Hilayel said that a lower number of pilgrims was a trend in the entire region and that he saw no need for extending the deadline for registration. "I think that everyone who intended to go to Haj this year has already registered and an extension of the registration deadline would not affect the number of pilgrims," Dr. Hilayel said.

Haj is one of the five basic pillars of Islam and should be performed by every Muslim once in a lifetime, if he has the means. In the past Jordan was allowed up to 15,000 pilgrims to Haj. This year many criteria affected the number of pilgrims.

It was during the first week in May when Dr. Hilayel announced that Jordan and Saudi Arabia had reached agreement on arrangement for Jordanian pilgrims to go to Mecca and Medina.

Many pilgrims from neighbouring countries pass through Jordan on their way to Saudi Arabia and arrangements are usually made for them to facilitate their passage through Jordan.

Syrian and Turkish pilgrims who travel to Saudi Arabia, via land, through Jordan, are usually offered facilities in Ramtha and Maan where they stay on their way to Mecca and Medina.

During the first week of April a committee met to discuss the arrangements that are necessary for the pilgrims coming from neighbouring countries. During the meeting, which was held at the Ministry of Awqaf, and after reviewing the various articles of agreement between the religious affairs authorities in Jordan and Turkey, the committee was briefed on all the facilities provided for the Turkish pilgrims. The agreement provided that each Turkish pilgrim should produce a certificate showing that they had been vaccinated against meningitis 10 days before entering Jordan.

Graduation ceremony of 12 geochemistry students attended by NRA head

NRA, Yarmouk U. cooperate in exploring natural resources

AMMAN (Petra) — Director of the Natural Resources Authority (NRA) Kamal Jreisat Thursday attended the graduation ceremony of 12 students who had completed their higher studies in geochemistry at Yarmouk University.

Addressing the celebration, which was held at the NRA, Mr. Jreisat said the NRA had started using this science for prospecting for natural ores at the beginning of 1986, when it undertook the first geochemistry survey in Li-

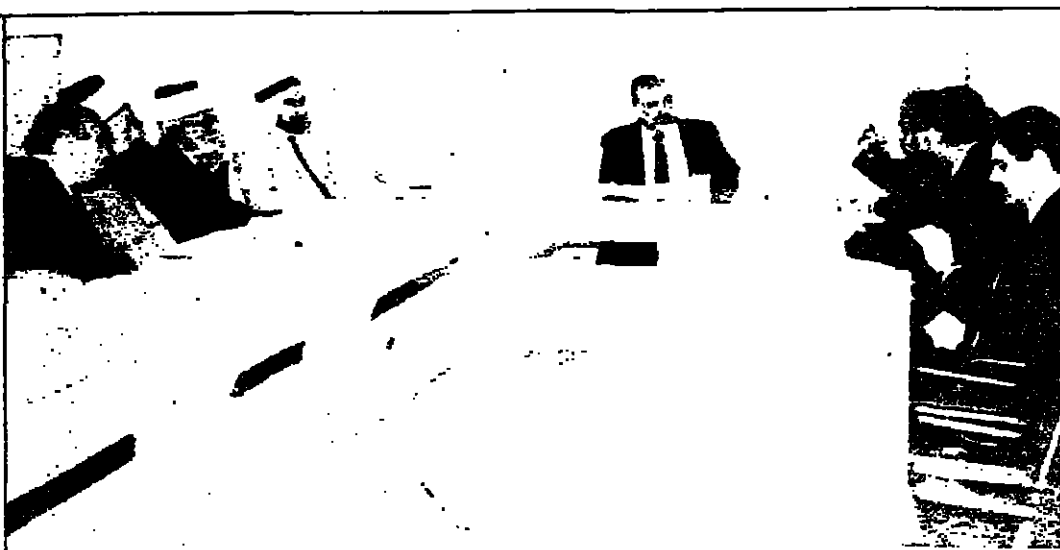
san, in Ghor Safi, to explore oil potential in the Dead Sea area. He added that other surveys were carried out later, with teams from the United Nations supervising them.

He cited a project for the exploration of copper in Wadi Araba, and of oil shale in south Jordan, as two of the major projects, carried out by teams from the authority using the geochemical method of exploring for natural ores.

NRA was currently using computers in evaluating geochemical information and in keeping samples and findings of surveys.

He lauded cooperation with Yarmouk University in this field, saying that it dated back to 1989 when the first training course, on using geochemical method in exploration of natural ores, was held.

At the end of the celebration Mr. Jreisat handed diplomas to the graduates.



AL AQSA COMMITTEE MEETS: Al Aqsa Mosque Construction Committee held a meeting Thursday under the chairmanship of Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Sheikh Ibrahim Zaid Al Kilani and reviewed the committee's works over the past period and the latest renovation works carried out at Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. The committee discussed the issue of carrying out renovation work at the Dome of the Rock Mosque in Al Aqsa sanctuary in the Holy City. The committee decided to form a sub-committee to supervise the renovations works.

The sub-committee, which is chaired by Sheikh Kilani, comprises as members the committee's Deputy Chairman Raef Najim, the Ministry of Awqaf's Assistant Secretary General for the West Bank Affairs Sheikh Abdul Azim Sahab, Jerusalem Mayor Roubi Al Khatib, Jerusalem Awqaf Council Mayor Sheikh Saadudin Al Alami, Director of the Foreign Ministry's Palestinian Affairs Department Ahmad Qatnani and the secretary general of the Royal Commission on Jerusalem Affairs.

Jordan marks Independence Day

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan Saturday marks the 45th anniversary of its independence from Britain. The Kingdom achieved its independence in 1946, thus fulfilling one of the objectives of the Great Arab Revolt which aimed at liberating Arab countries from foreign domination. The Great Arab Revolt was launched by the late King Hussein Ben Ali early this century.

The anniversary reminds Jordanians of their task of enhancing cohesion and national unity in the face of dangers posed by the continued Israeli occupation of Arab territories and the expansionist Israeli policies at the expense of Arab countries.

On this dear occasion, Jordanians also recall the achievements Jordan has made under the leadership of His Majesty King Hussein in who dedicated his life to serve his homeland, people and the Arab Nation.

Jordan's commitment to non-Arab causes, which has become a Jordanian principled approach, stems out of its firm conviction in the unity of Arabs and the need to further the Arab Nation's higher interests through safeguarding its freedom, independence, security and solving its disputes by peaceful means.

The late King Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein, founder of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, proclaimed Jordan, on May 25, 1946, a sovereign, independent state.

Since then Jordan has charted an objective policy, derived from the principles of the Great Arab Revolt, and has turned it into a base for its moves at both the Arab and international levels.

When King Hussein assumed power in Jordan, he started consolidating the pillars of independence and building modern Jordan through creating the right circumstances for building in all aspects of life.

One of the great achievements of King Hussein is that he built unique Jordanian citizens, fully equipped, physically, mentally, culturally and spiritually, to cope with the latest developments in the world.

Through the positive interaction between the leadership of the country and its citizens, Jordan has been able to make significant achievements since the proclamation of independence.

To mark the occasion, Huwwar Community College Thursday held a major celebration attended by Minister of Higher Education Said Al Tal, who also opened an art exhibition organised by the college.

Ministry of Culture and Youth will hold a celebration, Sunday, at Hussein Youth City, during which a number of Jordanian figures will make speeches, and read poetry. Among the speakers are Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi, Culture and Youth Minister Khaled Al Karaki, the renowned Jorda-

nian Advocate Suleiman Al Hadidi and the famous Jordanian poet Haider Mahmoud.

On the occasion, a number of Jordanian figures made statements to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Mr. Ahmad Al Lawzi said the independence was a coronation of the struggle of the Jordanian people and leadership and a true expression of what they and the Arabs sought. "It embodies the noble meaning of giving, sacrifice, and belonging to Jordan and the whole Arab Nation. It also reflects our national pride in the great achievements Jordan has made since its independence," Mr. Lawzi said.

He added that Jordan had never failed its Arab brothers and has never defaulted on its duties towards its citizens and Arab brethren.

Speakers of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiat said that one of the great meanings of independence was that the nation has taken the lead and has found its way and defined its identity.

"Jordan, through its geographic location, its human resources and cultural characteristics as well as its own experiences and practices, has been able to acquire a unique status in the region," Dr. Arabiat said.

He cited the free parliamentary elections which took place in Jordan almost two years ago,

liberalisation and the national charter as landmarks guiding the steps of the Jordanians, and the Arabs, towards welfare, dignity and unity of the Arab Nation.

Member of the Upper House of Parliament Bahjat Al Talhouni recalled the historic stand of the late King Abdullah Ibn Hussein, who made a speech on May 25, 1923, declaring the Trans-Jordan emirate independent. The speech was read in the King's behalf in Marka by chief of the emiri office Mohammad Al Anasi. Following the speech, the British High Commissioner announced his country's recognition of the independent government of Trans-Jordan.

In 1946, Jordan achieved its full independence following British approval of lifting the British mandate on Jordan and its recognition of Jordan as a sovereign, independent state, known as the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

Member of the Lower House of Parliament Suleiman Arar said that all people on earth aspire to be independent, adding that independence and freedom are inseparable notions.

The Senate member Ali Abu Nuwar said Jordan's independence gave the country more freedom and control on its foreign policy and the development of its national economic resources and more freedom to exercise its democratic and constitutional rights.



Ahmad Al Azaideh Symposium tackles national charter, role of political parties

By Odeh Odeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A symposium was held last week at the Professional Association Complex to discuss the national charter and political plurality in the Kingdom. Taking part in the symposium were the official spokesman for the Islamic Bloc at the Lower House of Parliament, Deputy Ahmad Quteish Al Azaideh, Secretary General of the People's Democratic Party Tayseer Al Zibri and Dr. Sahban Khleifat of the University of Jordan.

Mr. Azaideh stressed that the national charter emphasised political pluralism and allowed the establishment of political parties.

Mr. Azaideh expressed fear that, when political pluralism takes place in Jordan, the parties would be "fighting each other as in Sudan," or "the parties will be influenced by external powers which will make them the cause for the country's destruction instead of redemption."

He also said he feared that tribal interests prevailed over the country's interests, thus making every tribe establish a party.

He said that members of the general committee which drafted the national charter worked together in harmony, despite the differences in their views, and urged the Jordanian people to be open to each other's views in a democratic manner.

Mr. Zibri said individuals and groups have the right to establish political and social institutions which could express their views. These institutions, he asserted, have the right to practice their right to implementing programmes without being threatened or coerced.

He said the acceptance of political pluralism entailed the freedom of forming political parties and social organisations. This, he added, is related firmly to the freedom of the press, "because it is illogical to allow political pluralism and bar the parties from expressing their views and publishing their programmes via the mass media in accordance to legislations."

Dr. Khleifat affirmed that pluralism was a necessity. Dr. Khleifat stressed that no one party could claim that it possessed the absolute truth and that each side has only part of the whole truth. "No party has the right to change the identity of the society," he said.



Minister of Industry and Trade Ziad Fariz Friday receives at the airport the Indonesian Trade Minister Arifin Siregar at the head of a trade delegation (Petra photo)

Indonesian trade delegation arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — Indonesian Trade Minister Arifin Siregar arrived in Amman Friday, at the head of a trade delegation comprising several Indonesian businessmen, on a five-day visit to Jordan.

The minister and the accompanying delegation will hold talks with Minister of Industry and Trade Ziad Fariz and several Jordanian officials on ways to promote trade between the two countries.

The talks will also deal with

scopes of enhancing bilateral cooperation in consultative fields and launching joint ventures, such as exchanging commodities.

Mr. Siregar will visit Aqaba Port, Jordan's only outlet to the sea, the Jordan Wood Industries Company and the Jordanian Potash Company to get acquainted with the level of development Jordan acquired in the industrial field.

Members of the delegation, which was received upon arrival by Dr. Fariz and the Indonesian ambassador in Amman, are expected to meet with members of the Jordanian Chamber of Trade and Industry Federation to discuss means of increasing the volume of trade exchange and to inspect Jordanian products which have potential marketing possibilities in Indonesia.

Indonesia sold Jordan \$28 million worth of timber, tea and other goods during 1988, and Jordan sold Indonesia \$34 million worth of fertilisers and phosphate, according to a study by a firm specialised in trade between the two countries.

According to the study, Indonesia is a potential market for Jordanian products in view of its large population (around 180 million) and because Jordanian

manufactured products sell well. The Jordan Trade Association (JTA) last year organised an exhibition in Jakarta, capital of Indonesia, aimed at opening new markets for Jordanian products.

According to JTA, Jordan can sell an assortment of products to Indonesia, including pesticides, electrical appliances, fertilisers, veterinary products, textiles and carpets in addition to pipes for construction and sanitary ware, locks, paints, tobacco, valves, gas cookers and canned food products in exchange for Indonesian raw materials such as wood, paper, chemicals and iron.

The Indonesian minister later Friday visited the King Hussein bridge, in South Shuneh district, and was briefed by officials there on the humanitarian reasons which made the Jordanian government keep the bridges on the Jordan River open for people living in the occupied Arab lands.

The minister also visited the Dead Sea area to get familiarised with the area and get acquainted with its touristic sites.

The minister was accompanied in his tour by the director of the Economic Cooperation Department at the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Indonesian ambassador to Jordan.

GRATITUDE

AMMAN: Federico Chiste, director of Viaggi Del Bounconsiglio/Tronto, Italy, Dr. Di Mauro, President Lo Faro, D.L.F. Torino and the four journalists of "La Stampa," "Alto Adige," "Adige" and "Franche Soire de Paris" and the 125 members of "The Voyage of Peace to the Middle East" wish to thank His Majesty King Hussein, Her Majesty Queen Noor, the government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, represented by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Royal Jordanian Airlines and the people of Jordan for their unforgettable hospitality and kindness extended to every member of the voyage during their stay in Jordan.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab print daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975
جريدة الأردن اليومية مستقلة مطبوعة بالإنجليزية من مؤسسة الصحافة الأردنية

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
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Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4
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Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Shift may mean tragedy

A FEW weeks ago British Prime Minister John Major astonished the world when he told a conference of Britain's ruling Conservative Party that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein must go before sanctions against Iraq can be eased. "Britain," he said, "will veto any U.N. resolution designed to weaken the sanctions we have set in place for so long as Saddam Hussein remains in power." No doubt that British stance was shared by the other partners in the U.S.-led coalition against Iraq during the Gulf crisis, notably the U.S. Ever since the end of Kuwait's occupation by Iraqi troops three months ago, U.S. President George Bush maintained his barrage of attacks against the person of Saddam Hussein and repeatedly pledged never to normalise relations with Iraq as long as the Iraqi leader remained in power. Until very recently, however, the formal U.S. position had been to deal with the issue of sanctions in accordance with the ceasefire resolution SCR 687 and not on the basis of what individual Western leaders and individuals want. Unfortunately even this mediocre U.S. position changed when U.S. press secretary Martin Fitzwater confirmed a few days ago that the U.S. government wants the Iraqi people to negotiate a new political compact and that Washington will exert "all possible sanctions" against Baghdad until the Iraqi president is removed from power. Mr. Fitzwater went on to say that there is "no question" that that constituted a shift in U.S. policy. Deputy Adviser for National Security and CIA Director-designate Robert Gates had earlier announced the hardening of the U.S. stance in a speech to a publisher group on May 7 when he said that "any easing of sanctions will be considered only when there is a new government" in Baghdad and that "all possible sanctions will be maintained until Saddam Hussein is gone." It was apparently in line with this new policy that the Security Council Tuesday refused even to lift the sanctions partially when it rejected Baghdad's request for a one-time sale of oil in order to feed its people.

What is absurd about this change is that it is so patently devoid of any legal foundation or political justification. All the relevant Security Council resolutions that purported to impose sanctions against Iraq were directed solely to end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and never envisaged to go beyond that mandate. Now that Kuwait is free and liberated, there can be no legal basis whatsoever to maintaining these sanctions against Iraq. There is no resolution by the council that even hinted at establishing a link between the sanctions it had imposed and the status of the regime that may govern Iraq. It was taken for granted all along that the fate of the Iraqi regime and its leadership is a matter for the Iraqi people to deal with. If Washington and London now opt to change the scope and sense of direction of U.N. resolutions and read into them something which is obviously not there, then they stand to be accused of manipulating the U.N. system to their own ends. It is one thing for the U.S. and Britain to maintain economic and political sanctions against Iraq and quite another to make such policies an instrument of the Security Council. Both the U.S. and Britain are sovereign states that can pursue any policy that they may determine as useful and productive for their national goals. But to prevent the U.N. from lifting the sanctions on make-believe grounds that were never adopted by the council, then both countries are obviously acting illegally. The other permanent and non-permanent members of the council are therefore called upon to be careful of what such a step might mean and to care even more about the sanctity of U.N. resolutions. In the final analysis it is the Iraqi people who are the real victims in all of this. It is Iraqi women and children who face public health catastrophe if urgent action is not taken to allow the import of food and medicine into the beleaguered country. More than 170,000 Iraqi children that may die by next year unless the world regains its senses and starts helping Iraq immediately. It is utterly ludicrous — and criminal to destroy a whole people simply because some countries want the leadership of that country changed.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Friday commented on a statement by the U.S. Secretary of State James Baker who a week ago concluded fourth trip to the Middle East region and said that Baker's criticism of the Israeli policy of building settlements was countered by a defiance on the part of the Israeli leaders. The paper referred to Baker's remarks that everytime he visited Israel he was confronted with the fact that a new settlement was springing up, and noted that Israeli leaders were quick to denounce Baker's statement and to announce that the Jewish settlements did not constitute an obstacle to peace with the Arabs. The paper expressed the view that the strong, hostile response on the part of Israel was a sign that the Zionists will now embark on a campaign against Baker's plans coupled with the on going campaign on Damascus and Amman which are being accused of impeding the peace process. Although the Americans and the International community have learnt Syrian and Jordanian views and continued demands for the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, the Israelis are adamant and continue to delay solutions as they continue to deny the Palestinians their legitimate rights, the paper noted. It is clear now that the Israelis are not only making a mockery of the world community and its decisions by pursuing the building of settlements and refusing to withdraw from occupied Arab land, said the paper, but they are also ignoring the views of the United States. But, the paper said, Washington's reluctance to deal with Israel on equal footing as it dealt with the Gulf crisis is bound to encourage Israel's mutiny against the world community and the international legitimacy.

View From Amman

Some entertain illusions while facts on ground change

AFTER four trips to the Middle East in recent months, Secretary of States James Baker returned to Washington to report that yet again, no progress was made. For a while everyone on the Arab side was willing to compromise to the point of being compromised. Premier Shamir, however, was still not in the mood. Speaking in an interview only two days after Mr. Baker's fourth trip, Mr. Shamir said he had told Mr. Baker that "... the state of Israel has a terrible history with the United Nations and everyone in Israel who wants to protect himself should distance himself from it ..."

Strange words from the leader of a country whose very creation, birth certificate and whatever legitimacy it may think it has, come from the United Nations. But then what Shamir says, in fact what any premier of Israel says since 1948, has a habit of becoming a fact of life and in some instances even international "law."

This brings us back to square one. For now most Western and Arab leaders are very busy indeed trying to find out what is on Shamir's mind. As if they don't know!

The fact of the matter is that everyone knows what Shamir wants and he knows that they know and that no one can do anything about it. The man after all is not only a winner and the leader of a "winner" state, but he has also to contend with opposition from within his own coalition to any concessions regarding any possible withdrawal from the occupied territories. In the ranks of his supporters he has Sharon, Ze'evi, Giula Cohen, Levy and many hawkish retired generals who love to dabble in politics and make his life very difficult should he even contemplate compromise. Not that any such sissy thoughts ever

cross his mind anyway!

Shamir, after all, is not only a winner in Israel, but in the United States too. The Gulf war, a war fought by proxy on behalf of Israel, was also a success. Why should the man wish to compromise especially when he was paid for damages that the war did not cause him? With the reduction of Iraq, and with it, the last vestiges or semblance of power that may cause him to reassess his thinking, his hands are freer than ever in the area. Truly future historians may conclude that the 1991 Gulf war ushered in not only the so-called new world order globally, but the hegemonic Israeli era, or empire, over the region for the foreseeable future.

This is why Shamir can say with impunity that no land will be traded for peace. What the man has to offer — if he is offering anything, since I think that further Israeli expansion is yet to come — is simply peace for peace or to put it in another way peace on Israeli terms which places the whole matter, once again on the merry-go-round.

The merry-go-round is a children's ride found in amusement parks. It is a large round revolving platform on which are placed coloured wooden horses that are mechanically pumped up and down while the platform goes round and round. Fortunate children who can afford to go to amusement parks sit on these wooden horses which continue in a steady paced circular motion. Placed high above each horse is a brass ring, which if caught by the child entitles him to a prize ... usually a free ride. The operator, who charges money for the ride, controls both the speed, and the time children spend on the ride. He gives them the illusion that they are racing each other and thus a spirit of competition, camaraderie and joy, permeates the place for a

while. The loud brassy music is intermingled with the sounds of children's joy.

There is sound, motion and even some commotion since the parents as well as the bystanders and passers-by share in the melee. When the ride is over the children hopefully have gained some experience and pleasure. Experience and the momentary pleasure in the illusion of movement passes the time away until hopefully something better comes along.

Without a central soul, without leadership numbers are nothing. In fact often they serve the purpose of the illusion maker, the conjurer. Israel has succeeded in making myth fact and rendering original facts hopelessly useless. It is sad to say that Israel can still get us, along with almost the whole Western world on its merry-go-round any time it wants. For while we continue to hulk our senses with the illusion, facts are constantly being created on the ground. Whose fault is that? Israel's or ours? How come we can no longer distinguish between truth and lies?

It is sad that after so many decades of struggle with Israel and international Zionism, we still do not understand our enemy, not indeed do we understand ourselves. Whose sin is that?

Can the wolf be tamed if you try to be friendly or even if you pull one of its teeth? Which incidentally, we cannot do. Which is the worst ravager, the external or the internal wolf of our lives? How have our senses become so dulled? Some of our leaders still practice SHATARAHI, cleverness, on us instead of meeting what needs to be met head on. The need for steady strategic planning not mere cleverness in the turning of a phrase. They seem to continue to forget that clever as the fox is, his skin is still sold everywhere!

When push comes to shove

By Eric Hoskins

NOW that Kurd-Aid has come and gone, refugees are returning home and unarmed United Nations "guards" are heading north, the public would like to believe that for once the problem is actually being solved, rather than simply Band-aided.

However, Kurdish and Shi'ite refugees returning to Iraq are likely to find home less than welcoming. If one takes United Nations special envoy Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan's recent pronouncements to heart, conditions within Iraq are now critical. Food shortages are leading to rising rates of malnutrition, and a paralysed health service is unable to cope with surging epidemics of disease.

In Kirkuk, several hours north of Baghdad, an old man lay collapsed some ten metres in front of the emergency entrance to the general hospital. Suffering from a potentially fatal exacerbation of his chronic chest pain, there are no medicines to give him. Inside, the 400-bed hospital's only attending physician explained how she had just completed an emergency caesarian section "with flies swarming over the incision because operating room windows had been shattered during war-time bomb blasts."

Hospitals have been reduced to mere reservoirs of infection since most medicines are in short supply, laboratories cannot function, operating theatres have no supplies, and basic services (including food, water and electricity) are often unavailable.

In all parts of the country, critical shortages of clean drinking water have led to epidemic levels of gastro-enteritis (infectious diarrhoea). Thousands have died. In Nasiriyah, near Basra, ninety-eight per cent of admissions to the town's paediatric hospital are children with diarrhoea. Infants as young as two months old are admitted badly malnourished, dehydrated and dying. Once in hospital these babies are often given only two hours of intravenous fluid and then discharged since doctors have no drugs with which to treat the diarrhoea, and no food to offer these scrawny, vacant-eyed infants.

Food throughout the country is prohibitively expensive and generally in scarce supply. The U.N. admits that agricultural production has been halted due to a lack of fuel, fertilisers and spare parts for machinery and irrigation pumps. Between August and January, food prices increased by as much as 1,000 per cent.

Last week, the United Nations quadrupled the amount of its appeal for humanitarian aid for Iraq, to just under one billion dollars. UNICEF and the World Health Organisation have now warned of a "potentially disastrous situation" if more money and aid is not immediately forthcoming.

Yet, the scale of the human tragedy unfolding has been known by western governments and aid organisations for months. Not only has this tragedy been entirely predictable, it has been the product of six months of a strangulating economic embargo culminating with a war whose greatest impact was to eliminate Iraq's capacity to generate electricity, thereby paralysing the country's infrastructure.

One of the great myths of this war was that food and medicine would continue to be allowed into Iraq. From August to March, no food whatsoever was permitted to enter Iraq (from any source) according to the provisions of sanctions resolutions 661 and 666.

Resolution 661 stated that foodstuffs would be allowed into Iraq under "humanitarian circumstances." Resolution 666, passed one week later, indicated that "it is for the Security Council alone ... to determine whether humanitarian circumstances have arisen" and hence when food might be allowed into Iraq.

Indeed, it wasn't until a humanitarian emergency was declared in March, and only after considerable pressure from concerned governments and aid agencies, that even a single scrap of food was permitted entry into Iraq. This followed eight months of what effectively constituted a total food embargo in a country that historically imports more than seventy per cent of its food.

Not only had no food been provided by the international community since August 1990,

but for the first time in history a country and its government, in this case Iraq, had been prohibited from importing food (and medicine) for its own people.

Even with the March declaration of a humanitarian emergency, foodstuffs were only permitted entry when provided "through the United Nations in cooperation with ... other appropriate humanitarian agencies." Despite the presence of an internationally acknowledged food emergency, Iraq could still not purchase or import its own food relief supplies.

"For the majority of Iraqi civilians the war is continuing. Their suffering now is largely due to the cruel hand of punitive economic sanctions. As more and more coffins are spirited away aboard taxis and horse carts, towards cemeteries already bulging from ten years of war, isn't it time we stop the hurting and begin the healing?"

If we look at the international community's efforts to deliver food to Iraq, the figures are somewhat discouraging. A country with more than eighteen million persons, Iraq's daily food requirements amount to roughly 10,000 metric tonnes of staple foods per day, seventy per cent of this imported. From August to April, the total food provided by the international community amounts to less than 10,000 tonnes — enough for only a single day's ration and less than half of one per cent of the country's estimated needs during that nine month period. Iraq, in short, was not only left to starve, it was forced to starve itself.

Unfortunately, more was at play than simply western indifference to the growing calamity within Iraq. There are numerous examples where coalition governments actively prevented the export of food to Iraq. Over two thousand metric tonnes of infant formula and powdered milk, purchased by the government of Iraq prior to August 1990, remain blocked in

ports and borders around the world. Shipping companies and governments housing these stocks argue that the formula and milk powder cannot legally enter Iraq due to economic sanctions. The expiry date of the food is now dangerously close and it is likely that the shipments will be spoiled. Over 1,800 tonnes of milk powder have been blocked in Mersin, Turkey since August 1990. A further 500 tonnes have been held since August by authorities in Poland and Bulgaria.

When one begins to examine the impact of sanctions on im-

portation of medicine to Iraq, the gulf between myth and fact grows wider still.

Resolution 661 states quite innocuously that "supplies intended strictly for medical purposes" are exempt. Perhaps sensing the laxity of the earlier resolution, 666 quickly issues a clarification by specifying that "medical supplies should be exported under the strict supervision of the government of the exporting state." This measure is clearly intimidating if not outright threatening to those governments who perhaps naively believed that medicine was to be exempt from sanctions controls.

Historically, Iraq imports more than \$500 million worth of medicines per year (one of the highest per capita rates in the Middle East). Since August, it has been estimated that less than one-thirtieth of Iraq's medicine requirements were being met. All medicines — including vaccines, insulin, anaesthetics and antibiotics — have been found to be in short supply since late 1990.

Iraq's child immunisation programme has been suspended since September for lack of vaccines. Already, cases of paralytic polio are on the rise, and outbreaks of measles are likely.

Despite access to health care being a fundamental human right, the following methods were used to effectively ban medicine from entering Iraq.

More than fifty separate consignments of medicines were purchased by the government of Iraq prior to August 1990. These medicines are still being held in foreign ports and border stores, where shipping companies or the governments themselves are preventing these medicines from being forwarded to Iraq. Indeed many pharmaceutical companies have refused to sell medicines to Iraq since the August embargo. In many countries, a special license must be issued by the government before medicines can be purchased or shipped to Iraq.

Finally, only those items which the Security Council has deemed "supplies intended strictly for medical purposes" are allowed under the sanctions restrictions. All materials, spare parts, transport, and other para-medical items essential for the operation of a health care system are still prohibited or allowed only on a case-by-case basis after agencies submit an application to the Security Council.

As a result of the above measures, Iraq has had no choice but to join Bangladesh and Africa in the growing queue of countries appealing for humanitarian assistance.

But, unlike Bangladesh and Africa, the solution to Iraq's crisis is far more manageable. A rich country, remove all non-military sanctions and Iraq will be capable of providing its own currency for relief and reconstruction. Allow Iraq to export petroleum and they will once again have the funds with which to purchase food and medicine for the Iraqi population. And by offering genuine United Nations assistance the international community will possess the requisite supervision to ensure compliance with ceasefire terms.

Yet we continue to sweep the sanctions issue under the carpet. We must stop seeing sanctions as

justified leverage against the Baghdad regime and consider that we have drifted a long way from the original terms of their implementation.

But we must acknowledge one further iniquity, one reason why the peace movement in particular has been loath to acknowledge the controversy surrounding sanctions. After relentlessly championing the cause of sanctions against apartheid South Africa, how can we possibly suggest that punitive sanctions should not be imposed with the same vigour against Iraq.

However, there are important differences. Unlike South Africa, it must be concluded that the majority of Iraqis do not wish sanctions to continue against them. Sanctions were applied before the war, when no such humanitarian emergency existed, and when sanctions were meant to weaken, not kill.

Furthermore, sanctions against Iraq were applied as part of a non-violent campaign to force the Iraqi military out of occupied Kuwait. It was understood that sanctions would be removed following the Iraqi withdrawal. However, upon implementation of the ceasefire agreement, it became clear that sanctions would only be lifted once Iraq complied fully with the ceasefire terms. More recently, we have seen a further shuffling of the goalposts as at least one western leader (with Security Council veto power) has declared that sanctions will not be lifted until Saddam Hussein is no longer in power.

For the majority of Iraqi civilians the war is continuing. Their suffering now is largely due to the cruel hand of punitive economic sanctions. As more and more coffins are spirited away aboard taxis and horse carts, towards cemeteries already bulging from ten years of war, isn't it time we stop the hurting and begin the healing?

The author, a medical doctor specialised in public health and disaster relief, recently concluded a four-week health and nutrition assessment in both southern and northern Iraq. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times.

NATO wonders if politicians will pay for its new armies

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuter

BRUSSELS — NATO, busy drawing up plans for a new style of armed forces in the post-cold war era, now wonders if politicians will foot the bill for what could be a very expensive "peace dividend."

In a radical departure from its previous doctrine, the alliance's military planners have worked out a blueprint for mobile, multi-national forces capable of meeting potential threats to NATO territory from any direction.

NATO defence ministers, meeting in Brussels next week, are expected to approve the plans, part of a major reorganisation aimed at keeping the alliance in good shape for the 21st century.

But, at a time when member nations are slashing defence budgets because a threat from the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact has crumbled, alliance officials say the plans will cost a lot if they are to be militarily effective.

"Everyone thinks the new (military) concept will be cheap," said one NATO official. "That's

not true."

"Cost is clearly going to be a hell of a problem," said another. "We may well end up with a watered-down version of what we originally intended."

The 16-nation alliance plans deep cuts in military manpower from cold war levels, but setting up the new force structure will offset many of the savings — the much-vaunted "peace dividend" — made over the next few years.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The new military strategy aims to deal with any potential threat to NATO territory, rather than just an attack from the now-defunct Warsaw Pact.

NATO is still worried about the military power of an unstable Soviet Union, but is also concerned that problems in the Balkans, Eastern Europe or the Middle East could spill over onto its territory.

On paper, the list of costly requirements for the new units is huge.

Setting up new "rapid reac-

tion" forces, able to reach anywhere from the Arctic to the Mediterranean within days or weeks to head off a crisis, will be expensive in administrative terms.

To be mobile, a corps-sized "rapid reaction" unit of up to 100,000 men will need a fleet of helicopters, planes and ships available at short notice.

Training will have to be more varied to cope with different climates and the quality of the troops will have to be high, since NATO's forces are going to be smaller.

Quality and flexibility will require better communications, electronics equipment and expensive high-technology weaponry if the smaller forces are still to be effective in military terms.

"This involves a major rethink in the way our forces are equipped and trained and we will have to have a lot of sophisticated gear," said a NATO source.

"Things that go 'bleep' cost a lot — often more than things that go 'bang'."

Most NATO members are expected to cut their defence

budgets by between a third and a half over the next five years, alliance officials say.

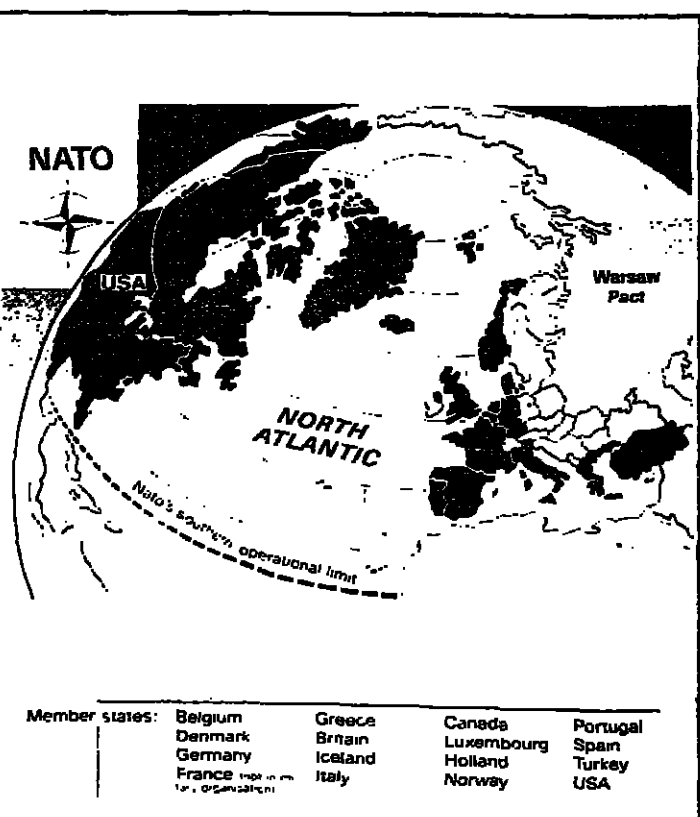
The alliance hopes to make savings by creating more multinational units, so that the costs are better shared among member nations. It also wants greater standardisation of military equipment.

But it has had little success so far because nations want to preserve their own arm industries and the jobs involved. Several joint NATO arms projects have failed since the Berlin Wall fell, largely because of funding problems.

NATO has also attempted to open up the highly-protected arms trade among NATO members so that costs can be reduced, but national interests seem likely to make this a modest venture.

"The military will say: 'We have to have this if we are going to be effective.'" The politicians will say: "We can't possibly afford that. And the two sides will have to meet somewhere in the middle," said another NATO source.

"The real question is — will it be effective if there's a war?"



U.S. congressmen defend Israel

(Continued from page 1)

process going if we can't get any action on settlement activity," he said.

Palestinian leaders have told Mr. Baker his trip to the region were getting too costly for their people since every time he arrives in Jerusalem to meet with them, new settlements are set up.

Contrary to the way initial press reports portrayed Syria's reaction to Mr. Baker's peace efforts, the secretary himself said that Damascus, which had traditionally insisted that Israel withdraw from occupied Arab land ahead of talks, has not, this time around, made that a precondition. "That has not been expressed as a precondition to me," he said.

It is Washington's view that a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation "could be a useful vehicle" for the parties to get to the conference and to handle issues that may arise during negotiations. The secretary said "almost everyone" he talked to — including Palestinians in the territories, Israel, Egypt, the Soviet Union and Jordan — agreed that such a delegation would be "the best way to proceed." He made it clear that that was what the White House would like to see, and added that the Palestinians appear to favour such an approach. Mr. Baker refused to say, however, whether a delegation would include Palestinians from East Jerusalem.

Asked about the purpose of the administration's \$57 million aid request for Jordan, Mr. Baker said that "it is not in the national interest of the United States to see a radicalised Jordan."

However, he stressed that "this does not excuse in any way, the position that the leadership in Jordan took in the Iraq-Kuwait war. We were very disappointed by that."

"Without Jordan there will be, in my view, little chance of a peace process. I think King Hussein is almost indispensable to a peace process," he added.

He pointed out that in the past Jordan had a fairly close relationship with the United States. "It has been a relatively moderate country. We want to see it continue to be a stable and moderate country, actively and affirmatively engaged in the peace process," he said.

Some believe that the "relative" non-failure of Washington's efforts thus far is based on that the U.S. has adopted significant elements of the Israeli agenda. Already, the Arab-Israeli conflict has been divided into two separate, though simultaneous, issues. That is a position many Arab countries, particularly Syria, had for a long time wanted to avoid. Israel has traditionally opposed a peace process that brings Arab countries together in a way that would permit them to "gang up" against it. But by Mr. Baker's own admission, Israel has gotten what it had for years insisted upon — a separation of the two phases of the Arab-Israeli conflict. "Israel has been very anxious to see a two-track approach and this approach is what we have embraced and been pursuing," Mr. Baker said. This dual-track approach contrasts with that which the White

House was seeking 18 months ago — getting a one-track Israeli-Palestinian dialogue going.

Furthermore, according to Mr. Baker, the purpose of a regional conference, as every party agrees, is not to impose a solution or dictate results, but rather, to get the parties to negotiate directly with one another. In other words, the conference would not be a forum for negotiations, but a means to an end — "a tool in our effort to get the parties to sit down face to face to sort out their differences and to break anachronistic taboos," Mr. Baker said. Even the role of the U.S., the secretary said, would not affect the process of getting the parties talking.

As can be seen from the debate between Congress and the administration, numerous lawmakers have moved in the direction of redefining the agenda of peace in the Middle East, making it clear that they would like to see Arab states end their belligerence towards Israel, recognise that state, and put an end to the secondary boycott of U.S. firms that deal with the Jewish state. That, in particular, is the feeling that members of Congress have towards the Arab Gulf states that sided with the U.S. during the Gulf war.

"Over the last number of months, we basically have to a large degree saved Saudi Arabia from the possibility of a significantly disastrous fate at the hands of Saddam Hussein," said congressman Larry Smith. "I believe that there are a lot of Americans who are extremely disappointed in what they conceive to be the lack of real response on the part of Saudi Arabia." A number of lawmakers urged Saudi and Kuwaiti leaders over the past few months to abandon their secondary boycott.

Congressman David Obey, the Chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, has insisted that Washington "not take 'no' for an answer" from its Arab allies on the issue of peace. The U.S., he said, has "pulled the Saudis' chestnuts out of fire," and as a result, should expect from Riyadh, and for that matter, from Israel, more cooperation in stabilising the region.

But in his testimony Wednesday, the secretary praised as a "major step forward" the decision of Saudi Arabia and its partners in the Gulf Cooperation Council to discuss regional issues with Israel. "They're doing something that Arab governments have been unwilling to do before — sitting down face-to-face with Israel — and they are only doing it because we asked them to do it," he said.

Madani calls for strike

(Continued from page 1)

The Socialist Avant-Garde party, said the country was in danger and urged the government to ban the FIS. It called on workers and merchants to ignore the strike call.

Trotskyites of the Workers Socialist Party, which is active in universities, also called for a strike boycott.

One of the FIS's fundamentalist rivals, the moderate Islamic

Learning for change

More women than ever before are saying they want fewer children, says this year's State of World Population Report from the United Nations Population Fund. And it is women with some schooling who are more likely to use family planning. Student Mosammat Razia Begum, who was married at 15, talks to Dr. Shahidul Alam about how her schooling has changed her outlook on life and fertility.

MOSAMMAT RAZIA BEGUM, at 17, is slightly older than the other young women in her class at the Narandi school in Bangladesh. She had been married when she was 15, but her husband abandoned her claiming that she was uneducated.

"He knew about that before we married," says Razia, slightly hesitantly. But she begins to talk more freely as the memories return. "If I had been educated he would not have been able to abandon me so readily, leaving me nothing for maintenance," she goes on, sitting surrounded by her slate, pencil and bamboo ruler on the schoolroom floor.

"My parents were wrong to marry me off so young. If I had a daughter I would not let her get married until she was at least nineteen."

Razia has been coming to the school now for three months. It is one of 4,000 set up by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) to encourage primary education for older children. Although the school Razia attends does not normally cater for 17 year olds, or married women, exceptions are made. Many of the teachers are women, giving an alternative role-model to the students. The schools have a policy of taking more girls than boys and provide free education to children of landless people to help prepare them for enrolment in state schools.

"I am fortunate to be here," says Razia, looking round the schoolroom with its corrugated tin roof and bamboo walls carefully caked with mud. She had to fight to come to school, for her father believes that a woman's place is at home. She muses aloud that had she been a boy her father, a devout Muslim, would surely have allowed her to study.

"My mother was married when she was twelve and like me, had no say in the matter. I want my sisters' lives to be

different. They should study and be given a choice about their marriage," continues Razia, animated now as she unbattles her thoughts. "Husbands will not dare to treat educated women badly. Both man and woman should be educated, for an illiterate man will not know how to respect a literate wife."

Razia would like to continue to study after school but knows that she would be too old to enrol in a government school. So she plans to go on studying on her own.

She feels it is important for a woman to be a mother, which she equates with marriage, but does not feel it is essential. "A woman doesn't have to get married. If all people were literate, they wouldn't say such things." And although Razia would like a child, she will not marry again. "A man may marry ten times in the same way as he can get away with mistreating women. My husband should be brought to justice — but things will not change until we are all educated."

Many of the girls who attend the schools have, like Razia, begun to question the restrictions imposed on them. More women want to go out to work, to be teachers or doctors. They want equal opportunities with men. And of course this has caused problems with local religious leaders as well as with fathers.

But Razia is unabashed. "I tell my sisters to study well and after that to get a job. If they get a job they will be able to do as well as men and men will respect them. What is wrong if women do the same jobs as men?"

"And then later," she adds, smiling for the first time, "when they marry I shall tell them to use family planning, to wait before they have their first child so that their bodies are strong and ready, and that two children is enough" — UNFPA Feature.

Jordan condoles

(Continued from page 1)

Indian president and sent the following cable to Mr. Gandhi's widow, Sonia: It was with deep shock and sadness that I received the tragic news of the heinous crime which took the life of my dear friend who I always regarded as my younger brother the late Rajiv Gandhi. This cowardly act

has deprived India, Asia and the world of the promise of state-manship which Rajiv had embodied and demonstrated. It is indeed very sad to see a man who shared with others the vision of a better future for mankind fall victim to a senseless act of hate and violence. At this very difficult moment I want to convey to you and to the members of your family our heartfelt condolences and sympathies as we pray that God will give you the strength and courage to sustain you and your children throughout this almost incomprehensible tragedy. God bless you — Your friend and brother Hussein I.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171

Society Movement, criticised the strike call which it said risked halting the democratic process. Mohsen Toumi, head of the National Democrats Alliance, a small independent party, said the strike risked degenerating into bloody clashes.

Abdelkader Belhai, president of the Algerian National Assembly Party, said "this political strike is inappropriate. It does not serve democracy."

THIS WEEK IN PRINT

INTERNAL issues ranging from improper practices on the part of certain departments and poverty to a rise in the spate of crimes as well as regional issues including the Middle East crisis and the Palestine problem acquired full coverage in the local press over the past week.

At least two columnists tackled the changes introduced by the Ministry of Education, which both describe as detrimental to the education system in Jordan.

Writing in Sawt Al Shaab, Salameh Ekour noted that it has been a practice by new ministers or heads of departments to introduce certain administrative changes in their departments, but those brought about by the minister of education undermined all the long studies and research programmes the ministry had conducted for the sake of improvements over the past four years. The writer criticised the retirement of well-seasoned officials at the ministry itself and the introduction of changes in the schools, describing these measures as detracting the educational process.

Another columnist, Shafiq Ubeidat described the constant changes, especially the most recent ones in the Ministry of Education, as introducing the country into what he called a field of experiments which are being applied on humans as well as on systems. Ubeidat said that the arbitrary removal of the heads of departments with long experience dealt a heavy blow to the educational system especially because this ministry and its schools have direct influence on the public.

The annual pilgrimage (Al Hajj) is tackled by Ahmad Dabbas in Sawt Al Shaab. He said that it was no surprise to see only a limited number of people registering to perform Al Hajj this year in the wake of the Gulf crisis. People still remember the fresh aggression launched on Iraq and are obsessed by the idea that certain Arab countries supported the aggression while foreign forces are still in the holy lands where the pilgrimage rites are performed. The writer noted that people were not to blame for shunning this year's pilgrimage because they could by no means forget the horrible picture that still hangs over the Arab World.

Two columnists at least tackled the question of rising crime in the country. Salameh Ekour in Sawt Al Shaab praised the efforts of the police force for discovering more than 80 per cent of the crimes and the robberies and retrieving the stolen items. But the writer openly blames the spate of crimes on poverty facing the country and called on the concerned authorities and organisations to help find solutions.

On the other hand, Mousa Kilani, writing in Al Dustour, blamed the authorities on the one hand and parents who possess fire arms on the other

for the growing number of those killed as a result of rash handling of weapons. Kilani gave a number of examples in which citizens resorted to weapons to settle disputes including sports events and family quarrels in the rural regions. He said that it was the sole responsibility of the government and security services to ensure real security to the public and save the lives of innocent people.

The question of poverty being the root cause of many social ills was covered in-depth by two columnists who expressed consternation on the widening circle of poverty, calling on the government and pertinent organisations to act immediately to deal with the question.

Mahmoud Daoud reminded the readers that Jordan now has 120,000 unemployed citizens, and suggested that the majority of those could be employed to do simple jobs for a minimum wage rather than leaving them victims to poverty or exposed to the temptation of crimes and robberies.

Mahmoud Zeidan agreed with the idea and said that as the pockets of poverty are on the rise in Jordan, one could only hope that the local authorities, working hand in hand with the General Union of Voluntary Societies, step up their efforts to find solutions.

Zeidan proposed that public and private institutions offer jobs only to those who are in need to support their families. He also proposed the creation of a higher committee to organise assistance to the needy, creating committees in every district to deal with urgent problems resulting from poverty and creating small size income-generating projects to benefit the needy groups.

The question of damaged crops, water pollution and poor harvests was also discussed in the past week's press. Salameh Ekour supported the idea of convening a national conference to discuss the agricultural question and said that this sector could by no means be promoted by merely issuing directives from behind desks.

What is wanted, Ekour said, is to involve experts and farmers and the ordinary citizen in the process of solving this important issue.

Ahmad Al Dabbas agreed with Ekour's view and said it required the experts and the officials going down to the Jordan Valley to visit the farmers and see the real sufferings of the Jordanian farmers. But Mohammad Daoud writing in Al Dustour placed the blame on the factories which still dump waste in the river that feeds the King Talal Dam which in turn irrigates the valley farms. He said neglecting instructions with regard to the treatment of waste water and negligence of monitoring the water going to the fields had caused the problem.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily criticised the government for

delaying the application of the National Charter and said that people have read a lot about the charter which would bring about political pluralism and political parties and deal with a lot of other chronic questions, but has not been formally endorsed. He said that the emergence of the National Charter should not be subject to whims or side issues that obstruct the democratic process in Jordan.

A columnist in Al Dustour called on the government to reduce by 100 per cent the customs duty on cars brought in by the expatriates, a process which, he said, can bring in good income to the national treasury and solve the problem of these expatriates. What applies to the small cars, Mohammad Kawash said, is also applicable to the trucks which are of paramount importance to the export-import industry.

A third columnist dealt with the wide spreading of the Maltese fever in Jordan. Writing in Al Dustour Ahmad Shaker said that this killing disease has spread among the young and the old alike, resulting from improper handling of animal diseases that infect farm animals. The writer noted that the proper cooking of meat was of course necessary, but that does not prevent the concerned authorities from maintaining stricter control over the sale of meat, dairy products and ice cream.

Two columnists criticised the way in which traffic police fine motorists under the pretext that they violate the law. Samir Qitami said in Sawt Al Shaab that the police tickets are issued to those parking in areas with no "no-parking signs" and those driving downtown where cars move at the speed of 10 kilometres an hour but refrain from fining those speeding on the highways and those not using the seat belts.

His views were echoed by Ziyad Al Shilleh who approved of the traffic regulations and considered seat belts as essential to reduce the consequences of an accident. But Shilleh, writing in Al Ra'i paper, criticised the traffic police for lying in wait in a number of streets with the sole purpose of fining motorists and also for giving tickets only to a selected group in downtown where accidents are scarce and ignoring the application of rules on the highways.

A columnist in Al Dustour bemoans the pitiable situation in the Arab World saying that the Arabs are now worse than they were following the defeats of the 1948 and 1967 wars, and the Israeli invasion of Beirut in 1982. Fahd Rimawi said that the Jordanians are afraid of democracy or afraid they would lose it following the consequences of the Gulf war: the PLO is afraid of an American-imposed settlement; the Syrians are afraid of the U.S.-Israeli alliances' intentions, the government of Egypt

is afraid of the masses and the economic crisis; the Algerians are afraid of the fundamentalists, the Yemenis are concerned about their unity and the Libyans are afraid of Egypt and Sudan is concerned over poverty and hunger.

Tareq Masarweh noted in a column in Al Ra'i daily that despite the challenges the Arabs are moving towards unity. He cited the Syrian-Lebanese accord as an example of this unity which, he said, should spread to all parts of the Arab World. Of course the first to protest at such unity is Israel which is a common enemy to both parties and to the Arabs at large, the columnist said.

The writer expressed his view that Syria could be the second target for the colonialist forces after Iraq.

Taher Al Udwan, another columnist tackling pan-Arab issues expressed satisfaction over the ongoing close contacts between Syria on the one hand and the Palestinians and Jordanians on the other. Writing in Al Dustour, Udwan said that this move is badly needed in the face of ongoing efforts towards a settlement of the Mideast issue and to confront Israel's plans and conspiracies.

As the three parties are seeking a just peace, the writer said, they ought to pool their efforts to confront the coming stage and to deal with all eventualities with a firm and solid stand.

The aborted mission of James Baker is blamed squarely on the Israelis, with Al Dustour daily calling the unfruitful tour as a blow to the United States and the United Nations alike. Israel does not want any peace conference advocated by the U.N. or the United States and therefore is launching campaigns at all levels to abort any moves towards peace, said the daily.

Ahmad Dhiban accused Baker of exercising his pressure only on the Arabs and failing to force Israel to implement Security Council resolutions and the international legitimacy. Whenever he meets Israeli leaders, Baker is counted on to display all signs of happiness unlike his tours in the Arab capitals when he shows a frown and gives statements declaring that Washington was in no position to impose solutions, said the columnist.

Tackling the same topic, Kamel Saleh Abu Jaber said that while the Arabs believed that the battle for Palestine lies in the Arab region, the Zionists believe that it should be fought in the streets of New York and other American cities where the Jewish lobby rules unopposed and exercises influence on the American administration and the U.S. Congress. The writer said that it was impossible for the Arabs to achieve anything at all, unless they can bring about real influence and pressure on the American voters and their representatives.

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Economy

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY MAY 25 1991 7

Financial Markets

in co-operation with
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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date: 22/5/91	Tokyo Close Date: 23/5/91
Sterling Pound	1.7283	1.7245
Deutsche Mark	1.7227	1.7253
Swiss Franc	1.4595	1.4633
French Franc	5.8455	5.8525
Japanese Yen	137.82	137.95
European Currency Unit	1.1935	1.1917

USD Per STG

** European Opening at 8:30 a.m. GMT

European Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.75	5.93	6.00	6.43
Sterling Pound	11.68	11.31	11.06	10.93
Deutsche Mark	8.68	8.90	9.00	9.06
Swiss Franc	8.00	8.00	7.93	7.81
French Franc	9.03	9.00	9.00	9.06
Japanese Yen	7.93	7.71	7.62	7.40
European Currency Unit	9.62	9.43	9.53	9.43

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	355.25	6.65	Silver	4.05	.087

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	.681	.683
Sterling Pound	1.1725	1.1784
Deutsche Mark	.3937	.3957
Swiss Franc	.4646	.4669
French Franc	.1161	.1167
Japanese Yen	.4925	.4950
Dutch Guilder	.3498	.3515
Swedish Krona	.1099	.1104
Italian Lira	.0531	.0534
Belgian Franc	.01921	.01931

* Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7350	1.7450
Lebanese Lira	.074	.076
Saudi Riyal	.1810	.1819
Kuwaiti Dinar	-	-
Qatari Riyal	.1829	.1840
Egyptian Pound	.1950	.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7200	1.7350
UAE Dirham	.1829	.1840
Greek Drachma	.3600	.3700
Cypriot Pound	1.4250	1.4450

* Per 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	21/5/1991	Close	22/5/1991	Close
All-Share	113.95		114.14	
Banking Sector	110.76		111.00	
Insurance Sector	112.41		112.59	
Industry Sector	117.41		117.51	
Services Sector	126.53		126.65	

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

	21/5/1991	Close	22/5/1991	Close
One Sterling	1.7370/80		1.7370/80	
One U.S. dollar	1.1495/1500		1.1495/1500	
	1.7090/7100		1.7090/7100	
	1.9260/7100		1.9260/7100	
	1.4525/30		1.4525/30	
	35.14/18		35.14/18	
	5.8050/8100		5.8050/8100	
	1270/1271		1270/1271	
	137.80/90		137.80/90	
	6.1260/1310		6.1260/1310	
	6.6560/6610		6.6560/6610	
	6.5430/80		6.5430/80	
One ounce of gold	355.40/90		355.40/90	

Strong France needs strong franc, more jobs, Cresson says

PARIS (R) — France's new prime minister, Edith Cresson, told parliament in her maiden policy speech that jobs, prosperity and social justice would be the priority goals of her socialist-led government.

But signalling no relaxation in the successful policy of monetary and budgetary restraint of her predecessor, Michel Rocard, she pledged that the new government would build on the basis of a strong franc and low inflation.

It was urgent that France and its European Community (EC) partners improve their industrial competitiveness to meet challenges from overseas, she added.

"A strong franc, mastery of inflation, rigorous control of public spending, stabilisation of direct taxation... these gains are our trump cards. I intend to consolidate them," Cresson said.

"On a strong franc we will build a strong France."

Without a constant watch on the ever-present menace of inflation and restraint on spending "nothing worthwhile can be constructed in the long term."

Cresson is known as a combative leftwinger.

Political analysts expect her to display a more robust style than the technocrat Rocard but say she has little room for manoeuvre, given the restraints facing the world's fourth largest economy.

"The government which the president has asked me to lead has set itself a priority objective:

To make France succeed in the Europe of 1993 and in the world of year 2000," she said.

To meet the challenge, the nation would require solidarity and that would mean combating "inequality, lack of opportunity, and, primarily, unemployment."

France currently enjoys low annual inflation at 3.2 per cent, but the 2.6 million jobless rate at 9.3 per cent is higher than that of its competitors as well as a social burden.

Unemployment was a "terrible economic, social and human waste... which explains a large part of our society's ills," Cresson said, referring to racism and unrest among the youth of France's low-income city suburbs.

"Our ambition is not only French, it is European," she told parliament. France would press on with the economic, monetary and political union of the 12-nation Community. Development of a European industrial policy would also be a priority.

"Europe cannot be only a single market. Europeans cannot depend on the outside for certain products essential to their technological future or their defence," Cresson said.

Airing a pet theme that has not endeared her to Japan, which she regularly attacks for protectionism, Cresson said Europe must act boldly, urgently and inventively to assure the future of its key automobile and electronics industries.

Albania details woes

VIENNA, Austria (AP) — Albania's communist government has painted a dire picture of staggering production shortfalls and rising foreign debt that may hamper efforts to privatise the economy in Europe's poorest country.

In remarks to the country's parliament, newly reappointed Premier Fatos Nano revealed that the new privatisation programme aimed at helping the economy calls for the selling of property but not land. He said prices would be liberalised, houses and some firms privatised, and state factories given greater control over their own funds.

Only foreign help can keep Albania going, Nano indicated in the speech reported by the ATA state news agency, monitored in Vienna.

Without mentioning the name of the late Stalinist leader Enver Hoxha, he blamed the current crisis on the country's past policy of self-reliance and refusing all foreign credits.

He disclosed that: — Albania is saddled with \$350 million (3.5 billion leks) in foreign debts and a \$320 million (3.2-billion-lek) budget deficit, and must negotiate a moratorium on debt repayment.

— There are more than 50,000 unemployed people in the nation of 3.2 million. Another 40,000 are paid 80 per cent of their daily

wage just to stay idle, at a cost to the state of \$7.3 million (73 million leks) so far this year.

— Production in 1990 fell 10 per cent from 1989, and economic growth through the 1980s was about 3.5 times less than in the 1970s, while Albania's young population — its average age is 27 — grew by two per cent a year.

Albania has never before painted such a detailed picture of its economy. The figures showed why tens of thousands of Albanians recently have fled their country for Greece, Italy or Yugoslavia, seeking a better future.

Foreign lenders so far have agreed to a moratorium on only about one-quarter of Albania's debt, Nano said.

Strikes and shortage of raw materials have paralysed many firms and agricultural production is falling sharply, Nano said. He called for a ban on strikes until the end of the year.

Production of milk — which urban Albanians can obtain only after queuing all night — dairy products and fruit and vegetables is 50 per cent down from last year, Nano said.

Drastic shortfalls also have been recorded in the output of electric power, natural gas, chemical fertilizers and chrome, one of Albania's chief exports, Nano revealed.

Amman Financial Market weekly trading

Following is a summary of trading during last week and the previous week:

	May 18-22	May 11-15
Daily average	JD 2,744,275	JD 2,065,732
Total volume	JD 13,721,375	JD 10,328,658
Total shares	9,339,843	6,801,184
No. Of contracts	7,354	5,776
Sectoral trading:		
Industrial	JD 2,257,543 (52.9%)	JD 1,790,164 (75.4%)
Financial	JD 2,984,658 (21.7%)	JD 1,311,252 (12.7%)
Service	JD 1,385,074 (12.1%)	JD 505,216 (4.9%)
Insurance	JD 135.5 (3.3%)	JD 76 (2.6%)
Share price index	135.5	133.7
No. of companies	73	76
Price movement (rise)	44	30
(Decline)	22	44
(Stable)	7	12

World Bank president 'turns the tables on the United States'

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The World Bank took the United States head on in a bitter battle to win more money for one of its affiliates, bank sources said Thursday.

They said that outgoing World Bank President Barber Conable postponed a board discussion of U.S. proposals to promote the private sector in a bid to convince America to agree to extra funding for the affiliate, the International Finance Corp. (IFC).

"Conable is playing hard ball in his last few months in office," said one bank source, who declined to be named.

Conable, a former New York congressman who is said to be a friend of President George Bush, is stepping down in August at the end of his five-year term.

Washington precipitated the fight by refusing to go along with a bank proposal to double the IFC's \$1.3 billion capital until the bank agreed to the U.S. proposals.

U.S. officials proposed that the bank do much to promote the private sector in the developing world and complained that it has focused too much of its efforts on helping Third World governments and state-owned companies.

The bank's board had been scheduled to take up the U.S. proposals Thursday but Conable pulled them from the agenda, bank sources said.

"He's turning the tables on the United States," said one.

The World Bank is anxious to clear the capital increase because a lack of money is delaying new lending by the IFC, its affiliate which promotes private sector development.

As it now stands, the IFC's investments are now growing at about five or six per cent a year, a dramatic decline from the 20 per cent annual growth rate recorded between 1985 and 1990.

During its semi-annual meeting last month, the World Bank sought to assuage U.S. concerns by promising to take steps to promote private sector development in the Third World.

The bank formed a special committee to advise it on private sector projects and said it would study 20 developing countries for ways to promote private business there.

But the measures failed to satisfy the United States, the bank's biggest shareholder.

Bank sources said they expect Conable, the United States and other industrial nations to try to work out the dispute behind the scenes in the coming weeks before the bank's board considers the issue of the IFC's capital next month.

The World Bank predicted Thursday that people in the Third World will earn a little more in the 1990s than they did in the 1980s because things will be picking up in the United States and other industrial countries.

"The increasing interdependence of the global economy over the last four decades has favoured economic growth," it said.

Average incomes in the big five — the United States, Japan, Germany, Britain and France — showed a decline last year and are expected to fall again this year.

But the bank predicted a short recession in the U.S. and healthy growth in Japan and Germany in 1992.



Barber Conable

For the decade to come it foresaw a turn-around in Latin America and in southern Africa, both areas where average incomes went down between 1980 and 1989 instead of rising as they had been doing for 15 years before.

There may also be an improvement among the poorer countries of Europe, and in the Middle East and North Africa.

Asia should do better too but the improvement will not be as fast as it has been, according to the bank's calculations.

"Incomes in the newly industrialising countries of east Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, are expected to continue to grow at rates significantly above the average for developing countries," said the bank's report.

"This rate of progress will be more difficult to maintain as these countries approach the level of other industrial nations,"

the report noted.

The report was also optimistic about eastern Europe, as it moves away from the Communist system.

"Growth prospects in eastern Europe are expected to brighten in the second half of the decade as the dust from the present political and economic turmoil settles and economic reforms begin to yield results," it said.

Improvements foreseen are mostly small. They range from a 52 per cent increase over the next 10 years in east Asia, a slower rise than recently for such dynamic countries as South Korea and Taiwan, to only five per cent for African countries south of the Sahara. That does not include the republic of South Africa.

By the standards of the United States, Western Europe and Japan all these Third World countries are poor and need help.

The World Bank, owned by 155 countries, is the biggest source. It lends about \$23 billion a year.

South Koreans, among the best off, had an average income of \$4,400 in 1989, compared with \$21,100 in the United States. In Africa the 113 million Nigerians, almost as numerous as the Japanese, had average incomes of only \$250. They earned only a little more than \$1 for every \$100 earned in Japan.

The report offered three other predictions of what may happen if things go better or worse in the industrial world.

"It's a question of Murphy's law: A lot more things can go wrong than can go right," said Lawrence Summers, a vice president of the bank and its chief economist, in presenting the report.

Romania faces labour unrest

BUCHAREST (R) — Industrial unrest over skyrocketing prices plagues one-communist Romania, as it switches from central planning to a market economy, a year after the first multi-party elections in half a century.

The workers, who provided a big slice of the two-thirds Majority vote won by the National Salvation Front (NSF) in those first free polls, are turning against the NSF government.

Major trade union groups claiming millions of members are threatening national strikes unless the government agrees to increase pay, sack managers and boost state subsidies.

Prime Minister Petre Roman was justified and jeered by workers at Bucharest's sprawling Four engineering plant last week when he went there at the request of striking unions to discuss demands for higher pay and management sackings.

Workers are bitter that conditions from the Stalinist era of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, ousted in the December 1989 revolution, have not disappeared under the NSF.

The Alfa free trade union cartel, Grouping unions with 1.3 million members, has adopted a resolution asking parliament to sack Roman and his entire cabinet.

Failing this, the cartel warned, it would soon start a general strike. The Romanian mining union federation proposed at the Alfa conference to launch a national strike to press for improved living standards along with better work conditions and organisation.

A trade union bloc representing a million farm and food industry workers staged a two-hour warning strike last week.

The food workers threatened an all-out stoppage that could halt food production if demands for subsidies, pay rises and job protection were ignored.

Dock unions in Romania's biggest port Constanta, on the Black

Sea, will join opposition groups for an anti-government demonstration one of many planned across the country.

The engineering trade union bloc Comras, grouping 300,000 workers, blamed industrial conflicts on the slow pace of talks on wages and employment and social security conditions as the government restructures the economy.

President Ion Iliescu voiced fears in a newspaper interview of violent unrest sparked by economic hardships.

National Bank Governor Mugur Isarescu told the opposition newspaper Romania Libera that inflation was running at 170 to 200 per cent after two price liberalisations in November 1990 and last month.

"Without adequate financing we are on the verge of an economic catastrophe," he added.

Dwindling industrial output, raw material shortages and a lack of expert managers are hampering a turnaround.

Malaysia to maintain output despite rise in oil capacity

KERTEH, Malaysia (R) — Malaysia, a major non-OPEC oil producer, said its production capacity would rise significantly when a new offshore field comes onstream, but the country would not raise output from current levels.

Malaysia's oil production capacity will rise to 690,000 barrels per day (b/d) by the end of the year when the Dulang offshore field comes on stream, the president of the state oil company Petronas has said.

"We don't intend to increase production despite the rise in capacity," Azizain Zainul Abidin told reporters.

Dulang, with recoverable reserves of about 180 million barrels, is currently producing 10,000 b/d. This will rise to 40,000 b/d by December and to 70,000 in 1995.

Malaysia is currently producing between 630,000 and 650,000 b/d. "We will keep to this level to rationalise our oil reserves," he said at the launching of Dulang crude in Kerteh, the base of Petronas activities in the region.

Malaysia produced an estimated 623,000 b/d in the first quarter of 1991, down from 645,100 in the fourth quarter of 1990 and compared with 608,200 in the first quarter of 1990.

U.K. cuts interest rates

LONDON (R) — Britain shaved interest rates Friday in a new move to help get its economy out of recession.

The Bank of England (central bank) cut its money market dealing rates by half a percentage point in a signal to commercial banks to bring down their base lending rates to 11.5 per cent from 12 per cent.

The Conservative government is under political pressure to bring down interest rates which it has kept high — causing an economic recession and clouding its electoral prospects — in a bid to squeeze inflation out of the British economy.

Base lending rates were held at 15 per cent for a full year, up until last October. They have been reduced gradually since then, and the Friday cut was the fifth of half a percentage point since February.

But ministers insist that each fall must be in line with declining inflation.

The Royal Bank of Scotland led commercial banks in bringing down lending rates in response to the Bank of England move.

Others which followed included National Westminster Bank and Citibank.

British inflation measured by the retail price index fell in April to 6.4 per cent after a peak last year at nearly 11 per cent, the legacy of a credit-fuelled consumer boom in the 1980s.

The business recession and rising unemployment caused by the subsequent credit squeeze are factors which make Prime Minister John Major's Conservative cabinet — facing an election no later than mid-1992 — unpopular with many voters.

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BRITISH COUNCIL
Schools Quiz 1991
The final round of the General Knowledge Schools Quiz between Terra Sancta School for Boys, National Orthodox School and the New English School, will be transmitted by Radio Jordan on:
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Cinema Tel: 625155
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Laila Alawi
in
THE INTOXICATED
Arabic
Show: 30:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

De Klerk: S. Africa is ankle deep in blood Pretoria talks marred by boycotts

PRETORIA (R) — President F.W. De Klerk, declaring South Africa's "ankle deep in blood," Friday opened a government-sponsored peace conference chiefly notable for its absence.

The African National Congress (ANC), the biggest black party and a major protagonist in township warfare that has killed 1,800 people in nine months, boycotted the event. It said the white government was a belligerent and could not be an independent arbiter.

It was joined by its allies the South African Communist Party, the million-member confederation of South African Trade Unions, the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and the main militant black organisations, the Pan Africanist Congress and Azanian People's Organisation.

The Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party of Chief Mangosuthu Buthe, whose followers have been fighting ANC supporters for seven years, was the only major black group at the two-day talks.

De Klerk dismissed the rows of empty seats in his opening

speech, saying he believed the conference could make a valuable start in ending the violence undermining South Africa's promised transition from apartheid to democracy.

He said it must produce a commitment to peace that would spur "a mighty effort by all South Africans."

"People are dying every day, children are losing their fathers and their mothers," he said.

"Our country in many areas stands ankle-deep in blood. We say we are a civilised country — we may never become immune to this."

On the eve of the conference, eight blacks were killed in the latest episode of violence. Two men in Belacavas sprayed a beer hall in Sebokeng south of Johannesburg with automatic weapons fire. Police said they knew of no motive.

De Klerk said South Africa must become a real democracy, based on justice and the impartial administration of law and order.

The ANC accuses white-led army and police of siding with Inkatha to destroy its chances of becoming the first black majority

government. The government denies bias and cites a black power struggle in the teeming townships.

The ANC has suspended power-sharing talks pending effective action by the government to stop the fighting, including stripping Zulus of their "traditional" weapons, spears and clubs, and is staging mass demonstrations and strikes to support its case.

It backs independent peace talks planned by the SACC.

Explaining the boycott, ANC Deputy President Nelson Mandela said De Klerk cannot be both referee and player. He objected to the president calling the conference without consulting the ANC.

The talks opened with De Klerk alone on a podium in the windowless conference chamber, addressing delegates arranged before him in 14 curved tiers of benches.

He spelled out the agenda and introduced the speakers in the 450-seat hall, which looked about two third empty.

The pro-apartheid Conservative Party, which gave the gov-

ernment a jolt Wednesday by winning a by-election with a greatly increased majority, also boycotted the conference — as it does the exploratory talks on black-white power sharing.

One surprise was the attendance of the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement, an even more hardline white supremacist group.

Its leader, bearded Eugene Terreblanche, arrived grim-faced with two bodyguards, one in a brown shirt and the other in a black tunic emblazoned with Swastika-like shoulder flashes.

Delegates included the government and the ruling National Party, listed as separate teams, the liberal white Democratic Party, other parties from parliament — which excludes blacks — white trade unions and businessmen, university lecturers and representatives of six black ethnic homelands.

Fringe groups included one delegate from the South African Traditional Healers Council, a black organisation that advocates spiritual and herbal cures for all ills.



Anatoly Karpov

Karpov challenges study on Chernobyl

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Soviet chess master Anatoly Karpov challenged Thursday an international study on the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear explosion by U.N.-sponsored scientists saying their methods were suspect and their Soviet contacts were politically motivated.

Karpov, the former world chess champion who is chairman of the Chernobyl Help Group, came to the United Nations armed with maps and statistics, which he said he related to U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

According to a report produced by the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the explosion at the Chernobyl reactor in the Ukraine produced smaller doses of radiation than estimated by some Soviet authorities.

Consequently, the report found no evidence of widespread leukaemia or thyroid illnesses but "important psychological problems of anxiety and stress related to the accident."

Reacting to the report, Karpov said, "from the perspective of future generations, we believe it may be an error to overestimate the dangers of the Chernobyl disaster, but to underestimate this situation is truly a crime."

He told a news conference the IAEA had excluded people who had lived close to the reactor and large teams of nearly 600,000 temporary emergency workers who helped clean up after the explosion.

He said non-governmental groups such as Chernobyl Union had information on these people, now scattered throughout the Soviet Union, but they had never been contacted by the IAEA.

Karpov maintained that more than 1,000 of the clean-up crew died, 70 per cent of whom were younger than 40 years of age, and about 5,000 contracted illness related to the explosion.

He said the IAEA could not determine the effects of leukaemia yet since authoritative Japanese studies following Hiroshima indicated this disease was detectable only seven to nine years after exposure.

Some Soviet officials have estimated that 1.5 million people, including 160,000 children, had suffered from high levels of radiation, resulting in cases of fibrosis, bloated thyroids, cancer of the thyroid and other diseases.

Yugoslav army arrests Slovene militia leader

BELGRADE (AP) — Federal military police arrested a senior officer of Slovenia's militia Friday, but tension between the two forces appeared to ease as federal army tanks ended a blockade of a Slovene defence facility.

Slovenia, which plans to declare sovereignty from Yugoslavia next month, has long been at odds with the Yugoslav army, which is controlled by federal authorities in Belgrade.

LT-Col. Vladimir Milosevic, commander of Slovene militia forces in the eastern part of the state, was seized as he met with representatives of the federal army to negotiate an end to a stand off between the two forces that began Thursday, the Yugoslav News Agency, Tanjug, reported.

The military policemen burst

into the local Slovene Defence Headquarters in Slovenia's second-largest city Maribor at 1:30 a.m. (2330 GMT) and disarmed the Slovene Guards in and around it, the agency said.

Army negotiators left the Building as Milosevic was being taken away.

Slovenia ordered the partial mobilisation of its territorial defence units Thursday as federal army tanks surrounded one of their training facilities near Maribor, about 30 kilometres (18 miles) south of the Austrian border.

The army's move came after Slovene militiamen temporarily detained two federal army soldiers near the police training grounds after they were spotted watching the facility. They were released upon questioning.

Education minister becomes new South Korean premier

SEOUL (R) — South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo named a conservative educator as prime minister Friday in a prelude to a wider cabinet reshuffle aimed at restoring confidence in his battered government.

Chung Won-Shik is the fourth premier to serve Roh since the president took office in 1988. A former education minister, the 62-year-old Chung is best remembered for outlawing a teachers' union and firing hundreds of defiant teachers.

Chung replaces Prime Minister Ro Jai-Bong who resigned Wednesday following weeks of nationwide protests set off by the April 26 fatal police beating of a student protester in Seoul.

Ro, a 55-year-old political scientist and Roh confidant, had been viewed by dissidents, opposition politicians and even some members of Roh's own party as the architect of the hardline security policies that led to student Kang Kyung-Dae's death.

But the appointment of Chung, less activist but just as conservative, prompted condemnation from government opponents.

"Roh is just replacing one

hardliner with another," dissident leader Oh Tong-Yol said in the southwestern city Kwangju, where funeral ceremonies began for a 19-year-old woman who set herself on fire in an anti-government protest.

Presidential spokesman Lee Soo-Jong said a wider reshuffle would be made after Roh consulted Chung. The new premier is now in Africa as a special presidential envoy and is expected to return to Seoul Saturday.

"The cabinet reshuffle will be aimed at calming popular passions following a series of demonstrations," Lee said. "The new cabinet will carry out national policies with new faces," he said.

Newspapers and Seoul-based diplomats have speculated that as many as seven ministers will lose their jobs. The semi-official Yonhap News Agency said the justice, finance and health ministers, among others, were likely to be replaced.

The appointment of Chung and a partial amnesty for political prisoners announced Thursday were seen as the main efforts by the Roh government to ease tensions over protests touched off by Kang's beating.

Disaster-hit Bangladesh to ask for \$2.4 b aid

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh, devastated by disasters, will seek \$2.4 billion from aid donors for development projects and imports in the 1991/92 fiscal year, Finance Minister Saifur Rahman said Friday.

"Besides, we shall also ask for a separate fund to rebuild our cyclone-battered economy," he told a news conference before leaving for a Bangladesh aid consortium meeting in Paris on May 29-30.

"There are indications that the donors will respond favourably to Bangladesh's annual aid requirement," Rahman said.

More than 138,000 people were killed when a cyclone that spawned 20-foot (six-metre) high tidal waves devastated the coast and offshore islands. It was the country's worst disaster.

Rahman Friday refused to give a figure for economic losses caused by the cyclone but the

Bangladesh News Agency (BSS) quoted him earlier as saying it could be around \$3 billion.

A full estimate of the losses would be known only after a task force formed with U.N. agencies and the Bangladesh officials completed its assessment, expected in three weeks," the minister said.

Soon after the cyclone on April 29, Bangladesh appealed for \$1.4 billion from rich nations and donor agencies for immediate relief and to refurbish the cyclone-damaged economy.

"But there is not much response from the donors," Rahman said Friday.

So far only \$365 million has been promised as relief for the cyclone victims, according to official figures.

"Probably the donors would not come in a big way until a full assessment of damage was made," Rahman said.

Seville could fall to Spanish opposition in elections

SEVILLE, Spain (R) — Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez could suffer a political setback and a personal embarrassment in Sunday's local elections if his Socialist Party loses control of Seville, his home town.

Opinion polls show that if opposition parties reach a power-sharing agreement they could win Seville, where the government has poured billions of dollars in investment ahead of next year's Expo 92 world fair, and also do well in other cities.

A recent opinion poll for the influential El Pais daily showed 36 per cent of voters plan to vote for Gonzalez's Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), down from 37.2 per cent at the last local elections in 1987.

The same poll showed the Socialists winning 36.4 per cent in Seville, against just over 25 per cent for the conservative Partido Popular (PP) and 22 per cent for the regional Andalusian Party (PA).

A deal between the PP and the PA would almost certainly put the PSOE out of office, a particularly acute humiliation in a city associated with the team of young, enthusiastic Socialist activists who stormed to national power in 1982.

Until then, Andalusia had been a rural, largely backward region, with practically no industry. Far from the lucrative mass tourism of the Costa Del Sol, the only boast for Seville — capital of Andalusia — was a proud cultural heritage.

By injecting \$8 billion of state funds into Seville to create the infrastructure needed for Expo 92 the government gave the area a tremendous boost, with hundreds of kilometres of motorways, new bridges and Spain's first high speed railway.

The people of Seville hope that high-technology industries lured to Andalusia by the high-profile expo, which itself is costing \$1.6 billion, will stay and turn the region into Europe's California.

But opposition parties say that, for all the money poured into the city, living conditions have become considerably worse, and opinion polls show that many of Seville's inhabitants agree.

"The PSOE had done in Seville what authoritarian regimes everywhere do," said Alejandro Rojas Marcos, leader of the Andalusian Party.

"The Socialists have done nothing so far to help poor people find housing," said Francisco Lafuente, who sells lottery tickets outside the city's bus station.

While unemployment in Seville remains above the Spanish average of 15 per cent, property and other prices have soared ahead of Expo, which is expected to attract 20 million visitors over six months. An increase in petty crime linked to an explosion in drugs usage has also provoked popular anger.

The Socialists are being damaged, too, by a protracted corruption scandal which has forced Gonzalez's long-time associate Alfonso Guerra, another of Seville's sons, to resign as deputy prime minister.

Guerra's brother Juan is awaiting trial on charges of using political connections for personal gain.

Gandhi's death will affect Indo-Pakistan ties — Sharif

NEW DELHI (R) — Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said Friday the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi will certainly affect relations with India.

Sharif told reporters after arriving for Gandhi's funeral that he favoured talks with Delhi on all outstanding issues and that the two countries could not afford growing tension in their relations.

The Indian and Pakistan armies have recently fought artillery duels and skirmishes along the ceasefire line that divides the disputed territory of Kashmir.

Sharif, on his first visit to India, Pakistan's traditional foe, since coming to power last December, said he would discuss bilateral issues with caretaker Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar later Friday.

The two countries have fought

S. Africa frees 7 hunger strikers

CAPE TOWN (R) — South African President F.W. De Klerk Friday freed seven African National Congress (ANC) political prisoners who had been on a hunger strike since May 1.

Justice Minister Kobie Coetsee said in a statement that De Klerk ordered their release on the advice of judges and doctors.

He named one of them as 24-year-old Chris Mofokeng, who collapsed in hospital Thursday and was placed in intensive care after doctors had battled for 45 minutes to revive him.

The seven were among an estimated 120 prisoners around the country who are fasting to force their release under the terms of an agreement last August between the government and the ANC.

More than 1,000 political prisoners have been freed under the accord which links their release to the suspension of the ANC's guerrilla war against apartheid.

But the ANC says at least another 1,800 people and possibly thousands more ought to be classified as political prisoners.

Coetsee announced the release of the seven after intense negotiations with ANC Deputy President Nelson Mandela who visited 16 prisoners in jail and in hospital Friday.

Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, winner of the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize, appealed to De Klerk Thursday to free all political prisoners immediately.

"That would be an act of true statesmanship," he said.

Lawyers accompanying Mandela said seven men in Cape Town's Somerset Hospital had told him they would continue their 24-day fast to the death if they were not freed.

Italy urges Japan to invite Gorbachev to G-7 summit

TOKYO (R) — Italian Foreign Minister Gianni De Michelis urged Japan Friday to support the idea of inviting Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to the annual group of seven economic summit in London, but Japan remained non-committal.

The summit of leading industrialised countries, scheduled for July 15-17, brings together the leaders of Italy, Japan, Britain, Germany, Canada, the United States, and France.

De Michelis at a news conference that he had told Japanese Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu that Italy was in favour of inviting

Gorbachev to the summit.

Kaifu said Japan would consider the argument, he said.

De Michelis, in Tokyo on a four-day visit, said there was a possibility leaders at the London summit could agree to joint Western aid for Moscow, struggling to cope with overwhelming economic problems.

German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and U.S. President George Bush, after meeting in Washington earlier this month, were non-committal about inviting Gorbachev and cautious on whether any new aid would be granted.

Last Cuban troops prepare to fly home from Angola

LUANDA (R) — The last Cuban soldiers in Angola packed their bags Friday for the final flight home to end 31 years of military involvement in the name of "revolutionary solidarity" in Africa.

Cuban sources said the last flight was expected to leave shortly after dawn Saturday, although the two countries' governments earlier said the airlift would end Friday.

Angolans have watched the Cubans leave with mixed feelings.

Some shed tears at the unveiling of a monument Thursday to the Cubans who fought and died in the country.

Others are glad to see the back of them. Diplomats said the new seafarer monument could cause resentment particularly among UNITA rebels who fought the Cubans over the years.

Cuba's President Fidel Castro sent a 50,000-strong expeditionary force to Angola soon after it gained independence from Portugal in 1975 to support the Marxist MPLA government against rival nationalist groups, South African forces and Western mercenaries.

Cuban troops have been involved in one part of Africa or another since 1960, mainly in support of Marxist governments.

But to orthodox Communist Cuba's dismay, those countries, like others in Eastern Europe, have either changed or switched ideologies in the past couple of years.

Angola's ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) ditched Marxism earlier this year in favour of social democracy and a multi-party parliamentary system.

President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos is due to sign a peace

agreement with the U.S.-backed National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) in Lisbon on May 31 to end a 16-year civil war that has devastated the once-rich country.

The MPLA and UNITA had been on opposite sides of the East-West divide during the cold war between Moscow and Washington. The end of the cold war helped push the Angolan foes into talks that resulted in the peace accord.

Diplomats saw the Cuban withdrawal five weeks ahead of deadline as an act of goodwill.

The pullout, monitored by a United Nations team and funded by the Soviet, Cuban and Angolan governments, was part of a December 1988 New York accord involving Angola and South Africa.

The Cubans agreed to leave Angola by June 30 this year, while South Africa withdrew from Namibia, opening the way for Namibian independence last year.

Dos Santos and Cuban Vice-President Juan Almeida Bosque unveiled the white-stone memorial to Cuban forces Thursday.

The monument was designed by Cuban sculptor Jose Delarue and based on a traditional Angolan Chokwe throne.

Angolan Foreign Minister Pedro de Castro Van-Dunem "loy" in a speech described it as "a gesture of the sincere and profound recognition of Cuba's role and a symbol of the friendship and solidarity between our two peoples."

Cuban Deputy Foreign Minister Alcibiades Hidalgo spoke in reply of Cuba's internationalist commitment and said his country was proud to have been comrades in arms of the Angolan forces.

Right-wing radicals sow terror in eastern Germany

DRESDEN (AP) — During the day, a Vietnamese youth hawks cigarettes on a sidewalk in this east German city. At night he chooses the safety of his boarding house.

"Sometimes it's best to stay inside and not risk your skin," said the young man, refusing to give his name out of fear he could be sought out by right-wing militants.

Right-wing hooligans are terrorising communities across former east Germany, attacking foreigners as well as native Germans. Neo-fascist ideology, nationalism and xenophobia are finding new followers among youths in the once-Communist land.

Many of the militants belong to gangs whose names are disturbing reminders of Nazi fanaticism in the 1930s: the SS East, the Storming Youths and the Saxon Werewolves.

Stiff-arm Hitler salutes and holders of "Siege Heil" are the trademarks of some of the thugs.

Law officials say that as east Germany's economic mess worsens, so does the violence.

The government rejects the idea that the extremism could threaten democracy in Germany, as the Nazis did in the 1930s. But still, the weak police forces in the east are to be bolstered by crack federal border troops to hold deter violence that blackens the name of united Germany.

In the southern city of Zittau in early May, German youths shouting "foreigners get out" stormed a dormitory for visiting Soviet

children stricken by the 1986 Chernobyl disaster. A Soviet adult was beaten while trying to protect the children.

A right-wing mob stabbed a 31-year-old Soviet tourist who was riding in a streetcar on May 9 in east Berlin, severely injuring him.

Militants have also beaten Polish tourists, killed at least two black Africans, and rampaged through cafes, bars and youth clubs across eastern Germany.

Stern magazine told of leaflets — signed by a group calling itself "Heinrich Himmler Ag" after the Nazi secret police boss — showing up in mailboxes in former east Berlin offering rewards for killing Poles.

Interior Minister Wolfgang Schauble said Wednesday that there are about 1,500 known members of militant right-wing groups in former east Germany.

But law officials in eastern Germany say the number of active militants is far higher. Bernd Wagner, a police specialist for right-wing extremism based in eastern Berlin, says there are as many as 15,000.

The thugs are mostly jobless, or youths cast into disorientation by their homeland's transformation from a tightly controlled Communist state into a free, capitalist society.

Some sociologists say the problem goes beyond alienated youths, maintaining that broad sections of the east German populace never fully came to terms with the Nazi dictatorship that directly preceded 40 years of

Communist totalitarianism.

"This concerns not only youths, but also a large part of the (east German) populace," said Wolfgang Kuehnelt, a sociologist at Humboldt University in eastern Berlin. "There is a large measure of ethnocentrism which has now come to the surface."

The two people murdered so far were both Africans: a Mozambican thrown from a moving streetcar in Dresden on April 1 and an Angolan bludgeoned last November in Eberswalde, north of Berlin.

About 20 thugs ransacked Namibians' apartments in Wittenberg after Germans and black Africans fought at a local discotheque. Two of the Namibians were critically injured when they were thrown out a fourth-floor window.

In east Berlin, police are warning blacks to avoid public transportation, where they could be targets of racist attacks.

"Anybody with black skin cannot feel safe in the eastern part of the city," Wolfgang Schinz, head of Berlin's criminal police, was quoted as saying by the Berlin magazine Zitty.

Asians have also been targeted. Skinheads attacked an east Berlin shelter for Vietnamese workers in April.

Vietnamese in many cities have formed gangs to protect themselves.

Dresden has become a hotbed of far-right trouble.

"Anyone who has leftist ideas

can count on getting beaten up," said one Dresden militant, a youth with shaved head wearing combat boots and army fatigues.

When asked his name, he made an obscene gesture and walked away.

Skinheads torched a coffee-house in Dresden's leftist Neustadt district and beat the owner. They then stormed down the street to another cafe and smashed the proprietor's head against a curb, leaving him seriously hurt in a pool of blood.

East German police are bewildered, unaccustomed to this kind of violence.

Wagner, the police specialist, confessed that many eastern police officers "are afraid and unclear" about the new laws of unified Germany.

A degree of right-wing militancy existed in Communist east Germany, but remained stunted under the repressive Stasi secret police.

Right-wing radicals have been trying to gain a foothold in former west Germany for years. Though there are occasional violent rightist outbursts, the west's affluence, political stability and effective law enforcement proved a solid defence.

Following German unity, right-wing militants from west Germany found ready disciples among the east's increasingly disaffected youths.

Exacerbating the problem are a dearth of judges and modern crime-fighting equipment in the east.

Column

Peggy Ashcroft in hospital after stroke

LONDON (R) — British actress Peggy Ashcroft, whose acting career on stage and screen has spanned more than 60 years, was recovering in hospital Friday after suffering a stroke. Ashcroft, 83, is one of Britain's best-loved and most versatile actresses, ranked alongside her friend the late Sir Laurence Olivier for her mastery of roles in works ranging from Shakespearean drama to movie thrillers.

A hospital spokesman said Ashcroft was "comfortable" after suffering the stroke at her home in north London. Ashcroft, made a dame by Queen Elizabeth II in 1956, last appeared in public earlier this year when she received an Olivier Award for her life's work in the theatre. She made her acting debut in the 1920s and became a leading exponent of Greek and Shakespearean drama before winning international acclaim as a film and television actress. Her work in films included roles in Hitchcock's Thirty-Nine Steps in 1985 and Sir David Lean's A Passage To India, for which she won an Oscar as Best Supporting Actress in 1985.

Dolphins, porpoises face extinction

LONDON (AP) — The number of dolphins, porpoises and small whales killed each year may have reached 1.5 million, three times previous estimates, conservationists claimed Thursday. They said 65 species are threatened with extinction. "The smaller species are in desperate need of international protection from hundreds of uncontrolled kills in the world's oceans, seas and rivers," said a 64-page report from the London-based Environmental Investigation Agency. "Within our generation, we will witness the extinction of most of the world's dolphin species and populations," the report said. It was published to coincide with the opening Monday in Reykjavik, Iceland, of the International Whaling Commission conference. The commission has protected only 10 species of large whales so far, "but we want urgent action to enforce control of global dolphin kills," said Allan Thornton, agency chairman.

Kissinger fulfils dream, delivers weather on TV

NEW YORK (R) — First the weatherman showed him the difference between the east and west coasts on a giant map of the United States and then former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger began negotiating. "We play by Washington rules. I get credit for all the good things," he told weatherman Mark McEwen as he took over Tuesday as weatherman for the day on "CBS This Morning," a news and entertainment programme broadcast weekdays throughout the United States. Kissinger said giving the weather on national television was the fulfilment of a dream. He had made the offer a week earlier when appearing as a guest discussing foreign affairs on the programme. Before the stint was over, the German-born Kissinger was delivering the weather for Moscow, Idaho; Rome, Georgia; Lebanon, New Hampshire, and Belgrade, Montana. He also gave the weather for all of the Middle East, evenhandedly declaring that it would be sunny in both Amman and Jerusalem. McEwen, worried about his future as a weatherman, offered Kissinger \$20 not to return and Kissinger vowed to put the cash in his Swiss bank account.

Sex therapy for prudish pachyderm

LONDON (AP) — One of Europe's largest bull elephants is undergoing sex therapy to stimulate interest in his heavyweight harem, a wildlife park director said. John Taylor, managing director at the cricket St. Thomas Wildlife Park, said they called in a psychologist when Sahib, 28, showed no interest in females Milli, Toto and Chitki. The four-ton elephant moved into the park two months ago after being brought up in a circus, where he was reprimanded if he showed any interest in females. Taylor said. "There are years of regression to unwind, so it is a big job," he said, at the wildlife park in Chard, 130 miles (210 kilometres) southwest of London. Psychologist Robert Smart said he has given the staff some tips on rekindling Sahib's passions. "He was probably threatened with a stick when he got amorous in the circus. Now we have to tickle him with a stick, so he sees it as something pleasurable," Smart said.